

Israeli majority backs proposal

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — A majority of Israelis support the option of giving Palestinian autonomy over the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho first, according to an opinion poll in Monday's Yediot Acharonot newspaper. The poll, conducted by the Yediot Acharonot newspaper, found 53 per cent of Jewish Israelis backed the plan while 45 opposed it and the remainder had no opinion. The poll institute questioned 523 people by telephone on Monday after Israeli officials said the government had reached an outline accord with the Palestine Liberation Organisation for the Gaza-Jericho first option. The liberal daily Hadashot published an open letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on its front page on Monday which said "Go forward Rabin. You've accepted a historic chance. Take it. Go with it (David) Ben-Gurion took a chance on the establishment of the state and went with it. (Menachem) Begin took a chance on peace with our biggest Arab enemy (Egypt) went with it. Your chance is to kill the poison we injected into our bodies, the occupation... the people will go with you in polls, in elections, in their reason and in their hearts."



'Israeli army to protect Arafat'

PARIS (R) — The secretary of Israel's Labour Party said on Monday Israeli armed forces would protect Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat under a proposed Palestinian self-rule plan. "Security in Israel and the occupied territories will be in the hands of the Tzahal (Israeli army). So it's the Israeli army that will protect Yasser Arafat," Nissim Zivli told Radio J in an interview. Mr. Zivli said Mr. Arafat was the Palestinians' sole recognised political leader. "If Yasser Arafat feels the need to live in Jericho, I don't see why we should oppose him," he said. The Labour Party secretary said Israel would try to strengthen the hand of Palestinian moderates in the occupied territories to prevent Hamas from taking control.

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Israeli cabinet approves accord with PLO

Labour leader sees possible Palestinian state after 5 years of self-rule in all occupied lands

Negotiators gather in Washington for 11th round, 'dramatic' announcements

Combined agency despatches

THE ISRAELI cabinet approved Tuesday a historic agreement with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to grant the Palestinians autonomy starting in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho, the prime minister's office announced.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin hopes the accord will be signed by the Palestinians and Israeli delegations at the 11th round of Middle East peace talks that open in Washington Tuesday for two weeks.

Elyakim Rubinstein, chief negotiator with the Palestinians, told Israel Radio the agreement enshrined "fundamental changes" in Israel's positions to date, including readiness to discuss the return to the territories of tens of thousands of refugees from the 1967 war.

The accord was hammered out during secret contacts in Norway between Israeli ministers and officials of the Tunis-based PLO.

"Today the horizons towards peace are open," Mr. Rabin told coalition members.

Benjamin Netanyahu, leader of the right-wing Likud opposition, accused Mr. Rabin's government of "going behind the back of the nation and setting up a bridgehead of a Palestinian state," which he argued would threaten Israel's "security."

He called for opponents of the plan to go "in the streets, with all the legitimate means, in order to block these dangers."

Sixteen ministers voted for the plan and two abstained. The approval was the first significant sign of progress since the peace talks began 22 months ago.

The plan calls for autonomy to begin in Gaza and Jericho within



Palestinian and Israeli demonstrators march for peace in Jerusalem (AFP photo)

months. "This is the first agreement that has been reached between Israel and the Palestinian people," said Environmental Protection Minister Yossi Sarid. "All ministers expressed satisfaction over the fact that the security of the state of Israel is being assured."

The secretary-general of Israel's ruling Labour Party said he thought Palestinians would be able to form their own state after a five-year period of autonomy for all the territories now occupied by Israel.

"I think the choice must be made by the Palestinian people itself after the period of five years during which they will try autonomy in the Gaza Strip, Jericho

and all the territories," Nissim Zivli told the French television station TF1 in an interview. But Mr. Zivli said it was not the right time for Israel to consider recognising the PLO as this would spark emotional debate in Israel.

"I think we have taken an important step. I am sure it is not necessary to put that problem on the negotiating table now," he said.

Mr. Zivli said the Israeli coalition government and his Labour Party were opposed to the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

"It's not the right solution, neither for the Palestinians nor for the Middle East," Mr. Zivli said, speaking from occupied

Jerusalem. But he said the Palestinians should have the choice. It was not clear whether the right to such a choice was part of the Palestinian self-rule plan or whether it would be offered the Palestinians only after they had won autonomy over all the occupied territories.

The office of Mr. Rabin declined to comment on Mr. Zivli's remarks and said it would not comment on statements by members of the Knesset, Israel's parliament, no matter what their party.

Bassam Abu Sharif, aide to PLO leader Yasser Arafat, was interviewed simultaneously from

(Continued on page 3)

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Israeli and Arab negotiators gathered here Monday for the 11th round of Middle East peace talks that are expected to render an agreement giving Palestinians limited self-rule for the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

The draft agreement calls for mutual recognition by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Palestinian self-rule in Israeli-occupied Gaza and the city of Jericho in the West Bank.

Palestinian delegates will discuss the proposed accord during two weeks of bilateral talks here and a declaration of principles could be signed this week in Washington where Middle East peace talks resume on Tuesday.

For the United States, an Israeli-Palestinian accord has long been considered a prerequisite for pursuing talks between Israel and Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

The proposed agreement announced in Israel and by the PLO in Tunis calls for the redeployment of the Israeli army, and for Palestinians to take responsibility for civil administration, notably of the police.

If accepted, the so-called "Gaza-Jericho first" deal would be the first tangible result of 22 months of often exasperating Middle East peace talks initiated by the United States.

According to reports from PLO headquarters in Tunis, Washington and occupied Jerusalem, "dramatic announcements" were expected.

"Separate" statements are expected within 24 to 48 hours," a source said in Tunis.

The agreement is a framework on the general principles of the interim settlement. It

deals with the transfer of powers to an elected Palestinian authority in all Palestinian occupied territories... and includes a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank area of Jericho," the source said.

Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi said she hopes for a breakthrough in the new round of talks, and would like to see open, direct contacts between Israel and the PLO.

"I hope that we will be able to say there is a breakthrough, but we still have some more work to do on it," Dr. Ashrawi said on arrival in Washington.

Asked if there would soon be regular contacts between the PLO and Israel, Dr. Ashrawi said, "I hope so. I think what they do behind the scenes and backstage should be done directly now."

Autonomy could be launched in the Gaza Strip in the next six months and a little later in the West Bank town, according to Israeli officials.

The stages of the plan, according to reports are:

- Autonomy in Gaza and Jericho;
- Early empowerment over health, education, employment and tourism;
- Autonomy over the West Bank;
- Elections in the territories;
- Discussions on a permanent settlement in the third year of autonomy.

In the preamble translated into Hebrew, the word PLO is notably avoided:

"The government of Israel and the Palestinian group which represents the Palestinian people agree that the time has come to put an end to decades of conflict and confrontation..."

"To recognise mutually the legitimate and political rights of both parties and to act with all their forces for peaceful co-existence, honour and mutual security and..."

"To obtain a just and lasting overall peace understanding and historical reconciliation within the framework of the peace process."

Reactions to the proposed pact have been coming in from interested parties from around the world. US newspaper editorials have been calling for prudence in pinning hopes on the new plan.

"The tough issue remains how to satisfy Palestinian demands to be moving toward eventual statehood and Israeli demands to make any new self-governing status for Gaza and Jericho a controlled test of a halfway house strategy," the Washington Post said.

And the Christian Science Monitor cautioned: "If after decades of occupation, and second-class status, PLO leaders are seen as giving away for free the last dreams of their people, a peace may be short-lived."

According to reports, an international force would take control of the King Hussein Bridge across the River Jordan under the compromise.

The Palestinians want to take over the bridge which leads from Jordan to Jericho.

However, this has been rejected by the Israelis who insist they keep their forces there and retain the right to turn back any "undesirable" Palestinians.

The two sides are considering handing the bridge over to an international force as a way to end the impasse, said the reports. Israeli forces would withdraw from Gaza and Jericho four

months after the signature of the agreement leaving them under PLO control, the official added.

At the same time Israel would end its military administration of the rest of the occupied territories.

General elections would be held in the territories nine months later, the official said.

A Palestinian police force would take over responsibility for internal security in Gaza and Jericho, while the Israeli army would remain deployed around the two regions.

The Israeli shekel would be dropped and the new currency become the Jordanian dinar.

The question of sovereignty would be left vague and discussed at follow-up talks between the Palestinians and Jordanians, the reports said.

Units of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) currently stationed in Jordan would be transferred to Jericho, and those in Yemen, Sudan and Egypt would go to Gaza, where they would be responsible for security after an Israeli pullout, the reports said.

PLO policemen trained in Jordan, Egypt and Sudan will join the PLA fighters to help keep the peace, PLO officials said.

There has been no official Syrian government reaction. But in Damascus, the government-run Tishrin newspaper warned that peace in the region could not be achieved "by installments."

"Partial solutions do not make a solution, nor do they bring about the aspired-for peace in the region," the newspaper asserted. It said Syria opposed the Gaza-Jericho deal.

Egypt urged universal Arab approval for the agreement between the PLO and Israel.

Arafat on Arab tour to explain proposal

YASSER ARAFAT Monday began a tour of Arab countries to explain a proposed autonomy agreement with Israel that he termed a "historic turning point" for the Palestinians.

Mr. Arafat flew to Cairo, where his plane refuelled and took off for Sanaa, capital of Yemen, where he will meet leaders there on the eve of the start of the 11th round of U.S.-sponsored Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington.

It was not immediately known where else Mr. Arafat planned to travel.

The interim peace plan calls for the Palestinians to gain autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho in what Mr. Arafat hopes will be a first step toward wider self-rule.

Mr. Arafat's plan, which could provide a long-needed breakthrough in the stalled Arab-Israeli negotiations, has been opposed by hardline Palestinian groups (see separate story).

These groups, opposed to the peace talks anyway, assert that Mr. Arafat's plan makes too many concessions to Israel without iron-clad guarantees of an eventual independent homeland for Palestinians.

There has been considerable opposition as well from within the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

But Mr. Arafat, facing turmoil in the movement, secured the backing of the majority of the PLO's ruling 18-man Executive Committee Sunday after an often stormy four-day meeting in Tunis, the movement's headquarters.

Jordan, which also is participating in the peace negotiations, has said it was not consulted about the Gaza-Jericho plan.

In the Gulf, state-guided newspapers Monday cautiously welcomed the proposed plan, but warned that it could pose dangers.

The oil-rich Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, cut off all funds to the PLO in August 1990 when Mr. Arafat supported Iraq after it invaded Kuwait.

But the region's governments generally have backed the PLO's

Clinton hails breakthrough, cautious on PLO

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton on Monday praised an apparent breakthrough in Middle East peace talks but said it was premature to say whether it would lead the United States to resume its dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"I am very much encouraged by what has happened there and very hopeful," the president said in response to a reporter's question at a photo opportunity.

"The administration has worked hard to facilitate it but ultimately whatever happens will have to be done by the parties themselves," Mr. Clinton said, meeting with advisers in the Roosevelt Room to discuss emergency planning for hurricane Emily, which is approaching the Atlantic coast.

Senior Israeli cabinet members and Palestinian officials said Israel is on the verge of recognising the PLO and that both sides could soon agree to start Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.

Asked if the United States might resume talks with the PLO, Mr. Clinton said, "if there is a new and different landscape in the Middle East, then I might be willing to entertain some questions."

He hastened to add, "I can't answer your question now. It's hypothetical and would only interfere with the discussions now going on. I don't think it's appropriate for the United States even to consider its own position here until the parties have a chance to work out a resolution of this."

Secretary of State Warren Christopher directed Dennis Ross, his chief Middle East mediator, and others to try to resolve some of the questions raised by the proposal, which Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres outlined to Mr. Christopher at a secret four-hour meeting on Friday.

American officials left little doubt that the prospective agreement is the result of secret meetings that Mr. Peres held with a PLO official in Norway. Foreign Minister Johan Jorgen Holst has confirmed he attended Mr. Christopher's meeting with Mr.

Peres in California.

Norway hosted at least 20 meetings between Israeli and Palestinian officials that formed the basis for a Middle East peace proposal, reports from Oslo said.

"We have had a very important role in the negotiations. Especially since May there has been real progress. Unfortunately, I can't go into details," Mr. Holst told the Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang.

From his home in Santa Barbara, California, Mr. Christopher also was on the telephone last week to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharara.

Mr. Christopher returned to his office Monday after two weeks in California. Palestinian, Syrian, Jordanian and Lebanese delegations arrived too.

Formal Middle East peace talks are due to resume here Tuesday unless the probable resignation of the chief Israeli negotiator, Elyakim Rubinstein, causes a brief postponement.

Mr. Rubinstein, who helped shape the 1979 peace treaty between

Israel and Egypt, objects to the "concessions" Israel is prepared to make to the PLO, diplomatic sources said.

The Israeli negotiating team arrived Sunday without Mr. Rubinstein. He is a career diplomat and protégé of the late Israeli defence and Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. Palestinian negotiators sought to have him dismissed when a labour-dominated government replaced the hard line Likud cabinet.

The proposal would give the PLO administrative control over Gaza and also the West Bank city of Jericho.

Mr. Christopher's intervention, the meeting with Mr. Peres and Israel's secret bargaining with the PLO have taken precedence over the formal negotiations at the State Department, though the talks provide a handy mechanism for working on details.

Shimon Sheves, director of the Israeli prime minister's office, is also due this week for talks with Clinton administration officials.

President Ezer Weizman urged Israeli politicians of all colours to remain calm.

"I hope that the parties will not fuel the tension on the eve of vital and historic decisions for the Israeli people," Mr. Weizman told Israeli Television.

"One side must not accuse the other of leading the country into war," he warned after a stormy debate in parliament during which Likud right-wing opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu charged Mr. Rabin with sowing the seeds of the destruction of Israel.

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(Continued on page 10)

Jibril threatens to kill Arafat; PLO hits back

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Hardline Palestinian leader Ahmad Jibril threatened Monday to assassinate Yasser Arafat if he accepted the "Gaza-Jericho first" plan for autonomy in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) swiftly hit back, denouncing Mr. Jibril as a mercenary.

"We remind Arafat of the fate of (former Egyptian President) Anwar Sadat and that of Issam Sartawi," said Mr. Jibril of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC).

"If he accepts the plot for Gaza and Jericho autonomy, he will pay the price, along with his associates," Mr. Jibril said in a statement.

Mr. Sadat signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979 and was assassinated two years later, while Mr. Sartawi, a close aide to Mr. Arafat charged with contacting Israeli groups, was killed in 1983.

A PLO spokesman, quoted by the Palestinian news agency WAFA in Tunis, said the organisation had saved Mr. Jibril from several assassination bids from within his own group.

The PFLP-GC leader was a "mercenary...who had worked against his own people and revolution over all the stages of the Palestinian struggle," the spokesman charged.

Mr. Jibril, whose non-PLO group opposes the U.S.-sponsored peace talks, warned that the accord on autonomy

starting in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank of Jericho would "trigger a civil war in Palestine."

It would also serve the "Zionist plan to liquidate the intifada," which has swept the occupied territories since December 1987, said the leader of the PFLP-GC, which is close to Syria and Iran.

He urged Palestinians in the occupied territories and abroad "to rise up and foil this plot."

The two main components of the PLO, aside from Arafat's Fateh, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), have also rejected the plan.

The two groups said Monday

Arafat was manipulating PLO funds in an attempt to force Palestinians into submission.

PFLP and DFLP officials said the PLO had exaggerated the gravity of a financial crisis so that ordinary Palestinians would accept Mr. Arafat's plans out of desperation (see story on page 10).

In Tunis, Bassam Abu Sharif, a political adviser to Mr. Arafat, dismissed the reports. "These statements have no basis whatsoever. We have a real financial crisis," he said.

But the DFLP and PFLP officials said Mr. Arafat in fact had billions of dollars stashed away in banks in Cairo and would use the money to buy political support in the Israeli-occupied territories when and if Israel gives them autonomy.

Officials loyal to Mr. Arafat say the organisation, once one of the world's richest liberation movements, has been hit hard by the loss of aid from Gulf states angered by Palestinian sympathy for Iraq during the Gulf crisis.

Some Palestinian fighters and pensioners have not received their usual payments from the PLO for up to seven months. The PLO has also cut salaries and is selling off real estate.

But the DFLP and PFLP officials said the loss of Arab aid was a problem rather than a crisis, and the PLO had a large income from investments in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the republics of the old Soviet Union.

"PLO investments are not affected. They are generating huge returns," said one. "The investments are either in Arafat's name, or only he and a limited number of his close aides know the details of them."

The United States, they added, had promised to help the PLO receive \$700 million in investment aid for the occupied territories and abroad.

Mr. Abu Sharif said the United States solve the PL

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Palestinian autonomy in months — money and politics permitting

By Nicolas B. Tatro
The Associated Press

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

Once Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) can agree on the details, proponents say Palestinian autonomy can be established in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in a matter of months.

But there are substantial obstacles: Both Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO leader Yasser Arafat are politically weak, facing serious challenges from within that may undo any agreement they negotiate.

Also, Palestinians are worried that the experiment in self-rule could collapse unless they get real political power and enough financial aid to convince the residents of the occupied territories that peace pays.

Perhaps the biggest threat is the assassin's bullet, and an outbreak of fighting between Mr. Arafat and Palestinian factions that reject peace negotiations.

"I expect if an agreement is reached there will be violence. I expect assassinations" by Islamic groups and leftists who reject any compromise with Israel, said Abdul Al Sattar Qassem, a political science lecturer at Bir Zeit University in the occupied West Bank.

Islamic militants in Gaza's Shabura camp told a reporter recently that they expected to

be fighting with activists from Mr. Arafat's Fateh faction soon after an agreement was reached.

"If Israel leaves, Gaza will become like Lebanon. There will be civil war," said Abu Mohammad, an activist with the Islamic fundamentalist group Hamas, who is wanted by Israelis.

For example, threats recently circulated against Palsal Hussein, the head of the Palestinian negotiating team who is a possible candidate to head the Palestinian self-governing authority that will replace Israel's military government.

If self-rule turns into a battle for dominance in Gaza and Jericho, it could ruin chances for Israeli withdrawal from the rest of the occupied territories and creation of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

"If they fail, all Israelis will see the failure as the end of any conceivable attempt to reach agreement with the Palestinians," said Joseph Alpher, head of Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Centre for Strategic Studies.

He said this was why the two sides should allow at least a year to train Palestinian security forces and lay down plans to prevent clashes.

There are also serious questions about the political strength of Mr. Rabin's coalition government, which holds 62 seats in the 120-member

parliament.

The Shas Party, with six seats, has threatened to pull out if either of two Shas members is forced to step down, as seems likely, from government posts as a result of corruption investigations.

The Shas bond with the left-leaning government is tenuous anyway, and the right-wing Likud bloc's campaign against making deals with the "terrorist" PLO could make inroads.

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu warned Israelis that Mr. Rabin's government was putting the PLO "on the map" with its headquarters only a short car ride from Jerusalem.

"Once we withdraw from the territory, Arabs who want to kill us will rule there, and they will rule in areas that are very close to the coastline and to Jerusalem. They will basically surround us, and they will threaten the country's security and existence," Mr. Netanyahu said on Israeli radio.

To a great extent the agreement is born of weakness, not strength.

Mr. Rabin's government sees Gaza and Jericho as a no-fuss solution. There are few settlers in either area, and the agreement is crafted to allow Israeli forces to remain in such settlements as there are thus avoiding a traumatic showdown with the 120,000 Jewish settlers and their right-wing supporters.

For the PLO, getting a foothold on Palestinian land is a

symbol step towards the goal of statehood and creates a momentum that could rescue Mr. Arafat from a financial crisis and increasingly strident demands for democratic reform.

Sari Nusseibah, a prominent Palestinian adviser to the negotiating team, said Palestinians estimated it would take up to \$12 billion to restore the economic health of the occupied territories after 26 years of occupation.

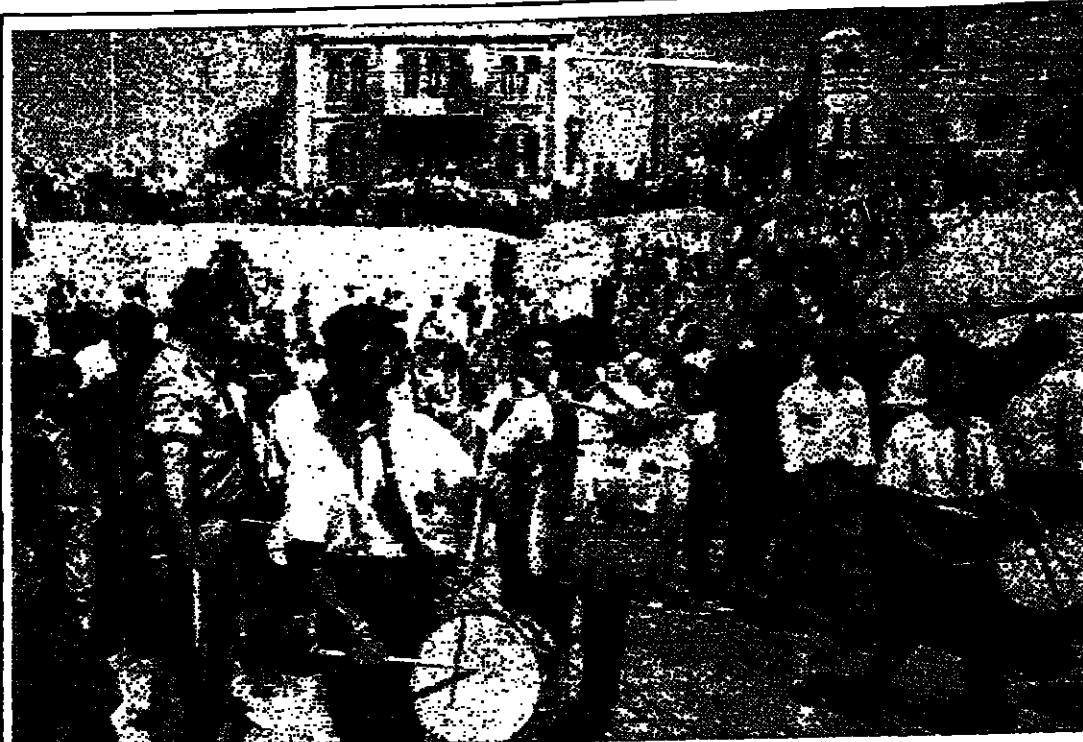
Even so, proponents of the PLO-Israel process predicted the obstacles would be overcome.

Avraham Tamir, who helped negotiate peace with Egypt and was an architect of the 1978 autonomy plan on which the current agreement is based, said it would take three months to implement once details are worked out.

He said the significance of the current pact was who it was with: the PLO. That gave the plan credibility — the lack of which forced Egypt and Israel to abandon efforts to reach a limited Palestinian self-rule plan in 1980.

"What is a historic breakthrough is not Gaza-Jericho. It is that we are dealing with the PLO," said Mr. Tamir, a former general who is close to the current negotiations.

Nicolas B. Tatro, the AP's chief in Jerusalem, has covered the Middle East since 1977.



PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY: Palestinian scouts march into the Old City of Jerusalem Monday to celebrate the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad. Israeli police were on hand to keep order during this first parade held with a police permission since the start of Intifada in 1987 (AFP photo)

Settlers vow action over Palestinian autonomy

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R)

Jewish settlers in occupied areas being considered for Palestinian self-rule have vowed to mount a campaign of civil disobedience if the plan goes through.

Right-wing government opponents said the moves toward an agreement for Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho would lead to an independent state that endangers Israel.

Workers of U.N. agencies and relief organizations said that the SPLA, despite its split into several factions, still possessed immense military firepower.

"This is a war that no one will win in the battlefield," said one relief worker.

U.N. agencies and relief officials here believe the worst is over for the SPLA.

"Garang has weathered the storm. Khartoum authorities had expected SPLA areas to be soft ground, because of the split in its ranks," a U.N. official said.

Following the split, Col. Garang is reported to have launched a massive recruitment drive, to build up his army to 100,000 men, any in northern Uganda, said.

Sudan jets stop bombing areas bordering Uganda

Arush, Uganda (AFP)

Sudanese airforce high-flying Antonov bombers that drove over 100,000 people from southern Sudanese border towns have stopped bombing raids amid indications that the tide of war has changed, sources said here Monday.

Heavy fighting started on Aug. 5 when the government launched an offensive against John Garang's faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which launched its own counter-offensive last week.

Over 47,000 people who have crammed into the little village of Kerwa, 160 kilometres south of the southern Sudanese regional capital, Juba, have confirmed that the spectre of a bloody offensive by government forces seems to have died down.

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U.N. talks unlikely to ease Iraq sanctions

NICOSIA (Agencies) — The week's technical talks between Iraq and the United Nations are unlikely to lead to a removal of sanctions imposed on Iraq, the Middle East Economic Survey (MENA) reported Monday.

The weekly newsletter, published in Nicosia, noted that Iraq is arguing it has complied with U.N. resolutions and therefore the international sanctions imposed after the Aug. 2, 1990 invasion of Kuwait should be lifted.

"However, such arguments are likely to be firmly opposed by major Western powers... which maintain that Iraq still has a long way to go to demonstrate requisite compliance with U.N. resolutions," the newsletter wrote.

It said the areas of compliance that most concerned Western nations such as the United States and Britain were disarmament, acceptance of the U.N.-demarcated border with Kuwait, respect for human rights and the release of prisoners of war.

Talks that began in New York on Tuesday also are to tackle the issue of the U.N. surveillance cameras that were installed at Iraqi missile sites but have not yet been activated.

The newsletter also pointed out several specific areas where Iraq's latest positions are unlikely to be accepted by the Security Council. Among these:

— Iraq's insistence that surveillance should be carried out using Iraqi helicopters and aircraft.

— Sanctions should be lifted unconditionally, including a resumption in weapons shipments to Baghdad.

The immediate ending of the "no-fly" zones in north and south Iraq.

MEES judged that since a full removal of sanctions is unlikely, "observers feel that it may be only a matter of time before President Saddam Hussein is once again obliged to fall back on the alternative option of limited and conditional oil sales."

United Nations Security Council resolutions 706 and 712 allow Iraq to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil under strict international control over a six-month period. Baghdad argues the terms violate its sovereignty.

MEES said however that recent Turkish calls for a review of the sanctions were a "significant new element in the Iraqi oil equation" although the "effect on U.S. thinking remains to be seen."

According to the respected weekly, Turkey has lost more than \$4 billion dollars from the three-year-old sanctions, mainly due to the closure of an Iraqi pipeline through Turkey.

In Baghdad, Oil Minister Osama Al Hiti said Monday his country was ready to resume exports immediately once the embargo was lifted and that was in contact with foreign oil firms.

Iraq selling oil

MEES also said the Iraqi government is selling oil products to the Kurds in northern Iraq and reporting to Iran and Turkey, a violation of the U.N. embargo.

The sales to the Kurds in north follow an agreement under which "gasoline, kerosene and gasoil are delivered from Mosul and Kirkuk," according to the newsletter.

It did not specify whether the accord took effect.

"In fact, the oil is being diverted by the Iraqi military to private companies that ostensibly work for it while deliver the products to private Kurdish firms," MEES added.

Gaza the difficult, and Jericho the calm

THE TENTATIVE agreement

Sunday between Israel and the PLO to implement autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho bring together two areas united by Palestinian hopes and divided by violently different approaches to achieving them.

The Gaza Strip, with 800,000 Palestinians living in an area of 362 square kilometres along the Mediterranean Sea, is best known as the December 1987 birthplace of the uprising against Israeli rule in the occupied lands. Most uprising attacks originate in its crowded, dusty refugee camps and towns.

Crossing into the strip from Israel is like crossing into a different time: Fields plowed by beasts of burden, ancient cars rattling along poorly paved roads, powered by little more than a prayer.

More than 70 per cent of Gazans classified as Palestinian refugees of Israel's founding in 1948.

Jabaliya refugee camp, with

more than 200,000 residents jammed along streets straddled by sewage-glutted gutters, is said to be the most crowded real-estate in the world.

The uprising launched the Hamas, the fundamentalist Islamic organisation which is the PLO's main opposition and has as its declared aim the sabotaging of the peace talks. It is strongest in the strip.

Uprising attacks have virtually wiped out Israeli memories of pre-1967 "cross-border attacks on Israel, when the Strip was controlled by Egypt. At the time, Israeli propaganda referred to the strip as "a dagger pointed at the heart of Israel."

Most Israelis here said they would be happy to let the Strip go. Polls show that nearly half would give it up unilaterally.

Israel and the PLO have proposed massive investment as a way of reviving the area — some Israeli leaders have described the area as a "potential Singapore."

But Israel Television reported Sunday that the Strip's likely resistance to compromise has led the PLO to demand a strong police force to control the strip.

There is also the question of some 4,000 Jewish settlers who have settled the south of the Strip. Their leaders have publicly vowed not to leave, but privately, many settlers have said they want out after repeated uprising attacks.

By contrast, Jericho's palm-lined, drowsy streets, ten kilometres from the Jordan River, represent a tranquil ideal to both Palestinians and Israelis.

The ancient town is a comfortable start for both the PLO and the Israelis because most Palestinian residents and Jewish settlers in the area are secular moderates who back compromise.

"We have a longstanding decision not to contradict government decisions," Danny Lavie of neighbouring Kibbutz Almog told Israel Television.

"This will be an opportunity to try and live with our neighbours."

Jews know Jericho as the first Biblical breach of the Israelites into the "promised land," where Joshua brought the walls down with the shouts of children.

The hugely popular song, "Jerusalem of Gold," written by Naomi Shemer in 1967, opines for access to Jerusalem "by way of Jericho."

For Palestinians, the heat-drenched oasis lacks the political activism identified with cities like Nablus and Ramallah, West Bank centres of the uprising.

But the town of 10,000, famous for its cafes and restaurants, is important to the Palestinians because of its proximity to the Al Hussein bridge, the major border crossing into Jordan.

The bridge is a link to employment and business ties in the Arab World, as well as family ties in Jordan.

Starvation rampant in western Afghanistan

By Terence White

Agence France Presse
HERAT, Afghanistan — Abdul is just over one year old but he looks like a wizened old man, with deep-sunken eyes and a wasted body of thin bones wrapped in loose-hanging skin.

Like many Afghan children here, Abdul is suffering from a complaint health experts call PEM — protein-energy malnourishment — in his case marasmus, but known to most people as starvation.

Abdul's 20-year-old mother, who comes from a small village outside the provincial capital of Herat in western Afghanistan, thinks she was "14 or maybe 15" when she got married. Abdul is her fourth child.

She brought Abdul to the Herat general hospital because she had heard about the special

clinic there run by the French-based relief agency Medecins du Monde (MDM), which is helping mothers like her cope with malnutrition.

Most of the mothers in this clinic have marasmic babies, but some cases of PEM called "kwashiorkor" occur, in which the child gets sufficient calories but not enough protein, so that they look swollen and if you press the flesh of an arm a deep impression caused by too much fluid is left.

"We opened this clinic in March 1993, because malnourishment is rampant in the villages," says Anne Favre, paediatrician and MDM medical coordinator for Herat.

Unlike other areas of Afghanistan, Herat is experiencing a welcome peace in the wake of the 14-year struggle against Soviet occupation and an

Afghan communist regime, but the process of normalisation after such a traumatic era takes time.

Dr. Favre says adults among the rural poor who are struggling to reestablish their livelihoods can survive on rice or bread alone but children need a proper, well-balanced diet.

At 13 months, Abdul weighs only 4.5 kilograms, when he should be closer to 10 kilograms, says Dr. Favre. Unlike many others, however, he will live.

"The first five days in hospital are critical for these babies. If they come in weighing less than 60 per cent of their normal weight for height, they only have a 50-50 chance of survival," cautions Dr. Favre.

She runs a 15-bed unit — although there is a need for 30 — where the malnourished in-

fants are fed a special milk formula eight times a day until they are ready to leave, when they are given military-style ready-to-eat meals of soyabean fortified rice.

Older children receive carefully balanced meals which include one egg a day and fruit.

"The mothers are given 3,000 Afghamis (about \$2) daily, which they pool to buy food such as rice, vegetables and meat from the bazaar," Dr. Favre explains.

Poor young families often get caught up in vicious cycles which are hard to break, comments Dr. Favre, such as a mother not having enough breast milk due to her own malnourishment, in which case poor substitutes such as tea are given to the child that may result in diarrhoea and even more weight loss.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Omnicast
18:30 A Comedy Series
19:00 News in French
19:15 Varieties
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 People Next Door
21:00 Faces and Places
21:30 A Kind of Magic
22:00 News in English
22:30 Feature Film: "Mayor of Hell"

PRAYER TIMES

04:44 Fajr
06:05 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:36 Asr
16:13 Maghreb
20:23 Isha

CHURCHES

Other military trial with Church of Sweden, open to the press.
In a related development, military source said that a batch of 65 defendants below conviction Tel. to the Vanguard of Conq. 661757
Saturday. More than 700 members of the group are involved in

Terraced Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel: 623541
Anglican Church Tel: 630851, Tel: 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel: 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel: 773261
St. Ephraim Church Tel: 771751
Armenian International Church Tel: 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 624238
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel: 623824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel: 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Hot weather conditions will continue today with winds changing at times and occasionally becoming northeasterly moderate. Heat wave will gradually subside on Wednesday afternoon. In Aqaba, hot weather conditions will prevail and winds will be northerly moderate.

Mm/Max. temp. 23/37
Aqaba 26/43

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammed Al Sway 732056
Dr. Mohammed Al Nakawi 819213
Dr. Jamil Marwan 776149
Dr. Mublis Hama 819220
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asana pharmacy 673055
Al Salan pharmacy 625672
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Stemecani pharmacy 637660
Nairouhi pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 647632

IRBID:
Dr. Fayez Al Qadi 248743
Alquds pharmacy (-)

DESERTS

20/40
Jordan Valley 25/42

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 36.8, Aqaba 45.2. Humidity readings: Amman 18 per cent, Aqaba 17 per cent.

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 630341
Rescue 199
Civil Defence Emergency 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Prison Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Amman Municipality 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power

Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381332
Khaldi Maternity, J. Am. 642816
Akil Maternity, J. Am. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsani 6641714
Shamsani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 843845
Al-Musharraf Hospital 672279
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Infirmary, Al-Muhajirah 7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Asrafieh 7751126
Army, Marj 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 666100
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)902650
Bin Sina Hospital (09)987332
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909090
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Great Catholic Hospital (02)722725
Bin Al-Husayn Hospital (02)247000
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

Q/ W/ H/ L/ A

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) International department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel: (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:30 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
08:30 Damascus (RJ)
08:30 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
09:45 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
11:00 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
17:55 London (RJ)
18:30 Cairo (RJ)
18:30 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
23:00 Madrid (RJ)
02:55 Madrid (RJ)
04:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:20 Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:30 Aqaba (RJ)
09:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:30 Madrid (RJ)
12:00 Vienna (RJ)
12:15 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:45 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
13:25 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:45 Frankfurt (RJ)
15:35 Cairo (RJ)
21:00 London (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:15 Larnaca (RJ)
23:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
01:00 Doha (RJ)
04:45 Colombo, Singapore (RJ)
04:45 Jeddah (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

08:15 Beirut (ME)
12:15 Larnaca, Vienna (OS)
14:30 Cairo (MS)
14:30 Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)

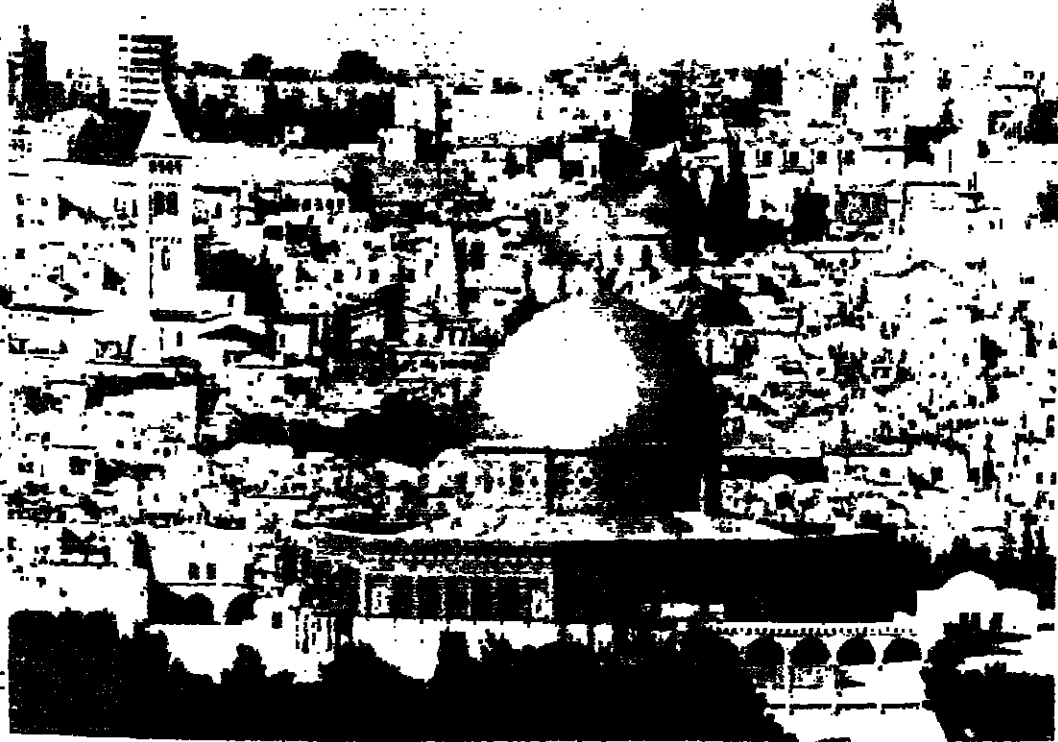
MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per 100kg

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Home News

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1993 3



Restoration work on the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem involves covering the dome with gold-gilded copper sheets supported by lead (File photo)

General Islamic Congress for Jerusalem praises King's efforts to protect shrines

AMMAN (J.T.) — The General Islamic Congress for Jerusalem (GICJ) Monday sent a cable to His Majesty King Hussein praising his efforts and continued drive to safeguard the holy places in the occupied Arab lands, particularly Al Aqsa Mosque.

Referring to the King's recent directives to the Prime Minister and the committee charged with restoring the Islamic holy places about the reconstruction of the ancient minbar inside Al Aqsa Mosque, GICJ said that the step will further enhance Arab and Islamic rights and keep the memory of Jerusalem alive in the minds of the future generations.

King Hussein Saturday ordered the government to act to rebuild

the minbar (a stepped platform for preaching) brought to Jerusalem by the Muslim leader Saladin who liberated the holy city from the Crusaders in 1187 A.D.

Specialists in reconstructing ancient sites said that the minbar will take at least two years to be rebuilt at the minimum cost of \$3 million.

The rebuilding of the minbar, which was destroyed in a fire in 1969, is a reaffirmation of the King's determination to defend Jerusalem and Al Aqsa Mosque in the face of looming dangers of internationalisation and Israel's Judaisation of the holy city, said the GICJ cable.

GICJ Secretary General Fayez Jaber sent another cable to King Hussein voicing the committee's appreciation of the Hashemite family's continued sacrifices for the holy places in Jerusalem.

Also Monday, which was the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday, King Hussein received cables of good wishes from kings and heads of state of Arab and Islamic countries.

The Prime Minister, the speaker of the Upper House of Parliament, the Chief Islamic Justice, heads of government departments, public and private institutions and representatives of various sectors also sent cables to the King.

12 typhoid patients recovering, no new cases reported in a month

AJLUN (J.T.) — Twelve typhoid patients are under treatment at Al Iman Hospital in Ajloun and no further cases have been admitted, said a hospital source Monday.

The source reported that seven children and five adults were being treated and were recovering from the infectious bacterial fever.

Hospital Director Abdul Aziz Al Khasawneh was quoted earlier as saying that the hospital had taken necessary measures to deal with further cases if needed.

Typhoid fever is caused by Salmonella typhi, a bacterium that enters the body via contaminated food or water, later it is absorbed into the bloodstream, causing blood poisoning and systemic infection.

Most major epidemics of typhoid have been caused by pollution of public water supplies. Food and milk may be contaminated, however, by a carrier employed in handling and processing them, by flies, or by the use of polluted water for cleaning purposes.

Fresh vegetables grown on soil fertilized or contaminated by untreated sewage are dangerous. Prevention depends mainly on proper sewage treatment, filtration and chlorination of water, and the exclusion of carriers from employment in food industries and restaurants.

All those cases so far admitted for care in Ajloun are under close

24-hour surveillance and the Ministry of Health in Amman has been informed of the situation, said Dr. Khasawneh.

Last week in view of the summer heat wave, the ministry said it was taking extra precautionary measures to prevent the entry of cholera cases into Jordan from neighbouring Arab countries, where the disease was reported widespread.

The health minister was quoted as saying that typhoid cases do exist in the country, but he noted that since Aug. 22 no new typhoid cases had been reported in Jordan for five weeks.

Heat wave to last until Wednesday

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The current heat wave which sent temperatures soaring to above 40°C in some parts of Jordan is expected to last at least until Wednesday, according to the Department of Meteorology Monday.

A department official told the Jordan Times that the heat wave, which started Saturday, was caused by hot, dry winds blowing towards the eastern Mediterranean zone from the Indian sub-continent and the Arabian desert.

In August, temperatures in Jordan usually range between 34 and 36 degrees, but they sometimes rise to 40 depending on the eastern winds, noted the official.

He said that on Monday temperatures reached 38°C but were expected to ease a bit Tuesday, and night temperatures in Amman will not drop to below 25°C.

In Aqaba and the Jordan Valley, temperatures reached 44°C in the past two days, which is normal for these areas during August heat waves, said the official.

Rafiq Shaker, the department deputy director, was quoted in the local press Monday as advising farmers to water their crops because the heat wave was evaporating whatever humidity was left in the soil and leaving plants dry.

The first heat wave this year was recorded by the department of meteorology in June when temperatures peaked at 39.2°C.

Jordan could formalise \$895m rescheduling, partial settling of commercial debts — Gammo

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan hopes to formalise an agreement on rescheduling and partially settling \$895 million commercial debts by early October, Finance Minister Sami Gammo said Monday.

Work on related technical documents is almost complete after Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Deputy Governor Michel Marto visited London and helped prepare them early this month.

The documents enshrine an agreement that Jordan reached with the London Club of commercial creditors in July. The accord, involving \$745 million in capital and \$150 million in outstanding interest, was approved by the Council of

Ministers shortly thereafter. "The documents are being given the final touches, and we hope to sign and formalise the agreement by early October," Mr. Gammo told the Jordan Times.

It was earlier expected that the agreement would be formalised by late 1993, but with the speedy preparation of the documents the date was brought forward.

The agreement offers the creditors a choice of selling up to 35 per cent of the principal with a discount of 35 per cent and collect 50 per cent of the outstanding interest.

The rest of the principal — 65 per cent — will be converted into 30-year par-value bonds guaranteed by 30-year U.S. zero option coupons

(predetermined-maturity-value instruments).

Ten per cent of the outstanding interest under this option will be paid immediately and the rest will be converted into 12-year dollar bonds and payable in 19 semi-annual instalments after a grace period of three years.

Jordan will pay an interest of slightly above the London Inter-Bank offered rate (libor) on the bonds.

Estimates of the total cost of the partial settling and partial rescheduling agreement vary between \$75 million and \$90 million. But the accord with the London Club represents a major breakthrough for Jordan, which started rescheduling its \$8.3 billion foreign debts since 1989.

The Kingdom, whose foreign debts now stand at around \$7 billion, has already rescheduled part of its dues to the Paris Club of creditor governments and government agencies.

It expects to resume rescheduling negotiations with the Paris Club in February next year after securing a seven-month postponement. Paris Club members hold about \$4 billion of the Kingdom's total debts.

Diplomatic sources say Jordan would not find it difficult to reach rescheduling agreement with the Paris Club members as along as its adheres to the economic restructuring programme agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).



Samir Gammo
The IMF and the World Bank have been supporting Jordan's economic recovery efforts since 1989 and officials from both international bodies say that the Kingdom has registered a good performance record with them.

EC transfers JD22m to treasury in second part payment in support of Kingdom's restructuring programme

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has received the equivalent of about JD22 million in the second tranche of payment from the European Commission (EC) as support for the Kingdom's economic restructuring programme, officials said Monday.

The commission transferred the amount — 25 million European Currency Units (ECUs) — to the Jordanian treasury, Finance Minister Sami Gammo said.

The assistance in foreign currency will be used to finance the private sector's imports, and the proceeds in local currency in the exchange will be used for local infrastructure projects, said Jean-Pierre Pierrard, economic counsellor at the EC delegation in Amman.

"The assistance is tied with the economic restructuring program-

me that Jordan has agreed with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)," said Mr. Pierrard, noting that last week's transfer was the second and final tranche of a \$0 million ECU pledge the EC made last year.

The community paid the first tranche last year and the second payment was delayed until Jordan secured IMF approval of a standby agreement on some of the measures it had to adopt under the restructuring program-

me, he said. The channelling of the local proceeds of the foreign currency aid will also be in line with the restructuring programme.

"The programme sets out a priority list: water, education, civil construction and health, in that order, under a counterpart fund with the Ministry of Finance," Mr. Pierrard noted.

Mr. Gammo, the finance minister, confirmed Jordan's full

adherence to the programme since it also is in line with the Kingdom's development priorities.

"We have been focusing on the same areas of development, and will continue to do so," Mr. Gammo told the Jordan Times. The EC assistance is not linked to the regular economic protocols that the community maintains with Jordan or the bilateral help that the EC member states extend to the Kingdom, Mr. Pierrard said.

The \$0 million ECU payment came from the European Commission's funds for the Mediterranean region, he said.

"Jordan receives the highest per capita assistance under this programme," the EC official said.

No definite commitment has been made by the European Commission on assistance to Jordan for the next fiscal year. Mr.

Pierrard was non-committal when pressed on this point.

But senior diplomats from European Community member countries say they have taken note of Jordan's recent appeal for economic assistance to help it cope with the severe impact of the Gulf crisis, including the return of more than 320,000 Jordanian expatriates from Kuwait and other Gulf states.

"The appeal is being studied by the concerned governments, and I expect movement in a positive direction soon," said a diplomat from a prominent Community member state.

The European Community as a whole and individual members have said that their preoccupations with conflicts in Eastern Europe and the need to channel funds there have no impact on their commitment to helping Jordan and other countries in the region.

Low food production is responsible for poverty, reduced food share — study

AMMAN (Petra) — A recent study on food supplies and Jordan's food production conducted by the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) has revealed that low food production in Jordan is responsible for poverty and a below normal rate of per capita share of food stuffs.

Mohammad Shahatit, head of the RSS Industrial Studies Department, supervised the survey which included people from various regions and the southern governorates of Jordan.

The results revealed that an individual's food energy intake has dropped from 3,460 calories in 1985 to 3,000 calories in 1992 as a result of reduced local food production.

Over the past two years Jordanians have lowered their con-

sumption of meat, rice, sugar, olive oil, vegetable and fruit, according to the survey.

The Finance Ministry has requested that the RSS determine the effects of low food production on the country's balance of trade, Dr. Shahatit said.

The low rate, he said, has had adverse effects on Jordan's balance of trade and payments and added a financial burden on the national economy by causing the cost of foreign imported products to rise.

Jordan is self-sufficient in products like table eggs, tomatoes, cauliflower, eggplant, cabbage, and cucumber, but the Kingdom still has to import sugar, rice, tea, coffee, legumes and fish.

As an example of the burdens on the balance of trade deficits,

Dr. Shahatit said that the trade deficit stood at JD761 million in 1985, but rose to JD1,008.6 million in 1990.

Noting that the population in the southern regions of Jordan suffers more from poverty, Dr.

Shahatit said that the survey reaffirmed earlier studies by the Ministry of Social Development which placed the incomes of JD 40 in 1978 and JD 68 in 1992 within the absolute poverty bracket.

King congratulates 4 nations

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Monday sent a cable of good wishes to the King of Malaysia on his country's independence day anniversary.

The King also sent a similar cable to the president of Trinidad on his country's national day.

King Hussein sent cables of good wishes Monday to the presidents of Kirgizistan and Uzbekistan on their countries' national day anniversaries.

The King wished the heads of these countries continued health and happiness and further progress and prosperity for their citizens.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Art exhibition by Iraqi artist Shaker Al Shadi at Alia Art Gallery.
- Exhibition of paintings by 25 Jordanian artists at the Housing Bank Complex exhibition hall.
- Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Bishara Najjar at Eshbelia Art Gallery, Amra Shopping Centre. The paintings depict Jordanian-Palestinian heritage, Jordanian antiquities, Arab Jerusalem, rural life and natural scenery.
- New art gallery, "Darat Al Fann," of the Abdul Majed Shoman Foundation. Programme includes the permanent exhibition and the "Chair" exhibition in Jabal Luweibdeh.
- Exhibition entitled "Reflections and Colours" by artist Zehab Abbas Mahdi at the Royal Cultural Centre.

SHOWS

- "The Eternal Torch," a variety of Circassian dances performed by Al-Jed Al-Jaded Club at the club's premises in the Seventh Circle.

Israeli cabinet

(Continued from page 1)

Tunis by the television station. He said he hoped the Israelis would now recognise the PLO.

Mr. Zivili said he was not sure Mr. Arafat wanted to leave Tunis to set up base in Jericho and that in any case the self-rule agreement did not give exiled Palestinians the right to return. But the Israeli army would protect Mr. Arafat if he were permitted to go to Jericho or the Gaza Strip, he said.

Mr. Abu Sharif disagreed, saying Mr. Arafat and all other Palestinians had the right to return to the region.

Mr. Rabin indirectly confirmed reports that the plan had been worked out in a series of secret meetings in Oslo, Norway, between Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and a senior PLO official (believed to be Mahmoud Abbas). The cabinet did not, however, tackle the issue of recognition of

the PLO, said Rabin spokesman Gad Ben-Ari.

Mr. Arafat, visiting Yemen, was quoted as saying progress at the Washington talks this week depended on Israel's commitment to troop withdrawal from Jericho and the Gaza Strip.

Withdrawal would be just "one stage in the negotiation process linked to transitional Palestinian self-rule in the whole of the occupied territories including Jerusalem," the official Yemen News Agency quoted Mr. Arafat as saying.

Mr. Arafat met in Yemen with former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, the architect of the first Arab-Israeli peace treaty that was signed by Israel and Egypt in 1979.

Mr. Arafat told reporters the meeting with Mr. Carter was "friendly and constructive." And that he urged the former president to help explain the Palestinian aspirations to the Clinton administration.

Mr. Carter was on a private



SEASON'S FRESH HARVEST: A cart-load of milkweed is hauled by father and son along a downtown Amman street (Staff photo by Aynsley Floyd)

Dr. Omar Abu Hileh
Consultant Physician, Endocrinologist and Diabetologist
Member of the
Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom
M.R.C.P.
Masters degree in Endocrinology and Diabetes.
M.Sc. U.K.
Former specialist in Endocrinology and Diabetes
in Charing Cross Hosp. and
Glasgow Royal Infirmary U.K.
Announces that he has opened
his private clinic in:
The Speciality Hospital
For inquiries please call: 06-693693

PROCUREMENT NOTICE
JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY
AQABA THERMAL POWER STATION-
STAGE II PROJECT
TURBINE ISLAND CONTRACT
(TENDER NO. 46/93)

The Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) announces the turbine island tender documents (Tender No. 46/93) for Aqaba Thermal Power Station-stage II extension project, are available for purchase as of Aug. 29, 1993.

The tender consists of the design, supply, delivery, erection, testing and commissioning of two (2) steam turbine units each 130 MW with all auxiliaries for the above project which is an extension to the existing Aqaba Thermal Power Station that consists of two (2) x 130 MW oil fired power generating units.

The project will be divided into four major contract packages, the boiler island, the turbine island, the civil works and the fuel oil tanks island.

The bidders will be allowed to bid for one tender package, any combination therefore, or a single turnkey contract. It is expected that Arab and international funding agencies will participate in financing the project. Procurement will be subject to the terms and conditions of the respective lending agencies.

Sealed tenders shall be submitted to the secretary of the Tendering Committee before 10:00 a.m. Amman time, Jan. 3, 1994, at the JEA office in Amman.

Tender documents are available from the address given below for a non-refundable fee of \$3,000 payable to JEA for each set consisting of two copies of the tender documents.

Jordan Electricity Authority
Zahrani Street-7th Circle
P.O. Box 2310
Amman-Jordan
Tex: 21258, Fax: 818336

PROCUREMENT NOTICE
JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY
AQABA THERMAL POWER STATION-
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Tex: 21258, Fax: 818336

Features

Oceans can handle nuclear waste, scientist says

By Paula Sands

WOODS HOLE, U.S.A. — Many of the world's scientific elite recently joined together at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts to discuss the problem of nuclear waste dumping, among them geology expert Dr. Charles Hollister.

"For the last year, there has been substantial press and scientific concern about new allegations that the Russians have made about Arctic radioactive waste dumping," he explained. "We thought that there was an awful lot of hype, a lot of misinformation — a lot of the stuff we were reading didn't make any sense to use from a scientific point of view."

So, Dr. Hollister says, when things got to this level of global concern, the world's leading experts on nuclear dumping — the scientists — decided to weigh in and try to "separate fact from fancy."

He went to Russia twice to help organize the conference — "to get the right people on board, get them here, and explain what was expected of them, what it was all about."

About 110 scientists from 11 countries and representatives from the Environment Defense Fund, Greenpeace, an environmental group that campaigns for nuclear-free oceans, and other advocacy groups had gathered at Woods Hole to express their opinions. Most of the circum-Arctic nations attended, including Canada, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Finland, the U.K., Lapland and Russia which sent more than 70 representatives. "The circum-Arctic nations are most concerned, and we brought them here to discuss the real, as opposed to perceived danger," Dr. Hollister said in an exclusive interview after the conference.

At the end, the consensus was clear, he noted. "We can see no biological, physical or chemical evidence that any of that material has entered the food chain or has caused any damage to the food chain, to human health or the environment at this time."

He added: "Danger to human health and the environment from deep-water sources of radioactivity, principally the (Soviet) nuclear submarines with their nuclear weapons that have sunk accidentally, is not, at the present moment, any cause for alarm. The same applies to all the reactors that have been dumped in the shallow Arctic by the Russians." He cautioned, "There are about 10 reactors on the Arctic

shelf that have fuel still in them, and they are estimated to be leaking into the environment at some point in the future — on the order of a 100 years or more."

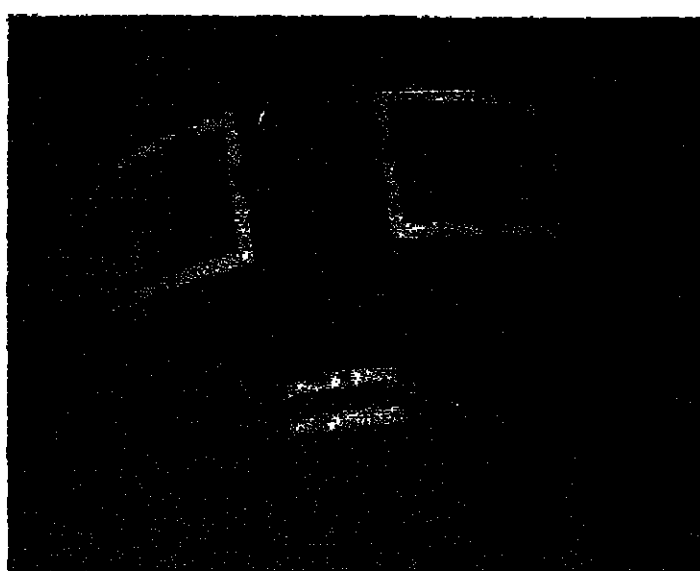
At the conference the scientists ran calculations on what would happen if all the reactors and containers dissolved immediately — a worst-case scenario. "Even when we ran the numbers on that, we couldn't come up with a serious threat to the environment or to the food chain or to human health," Dr. Hollister said. There were minority opinions among the advocacy groups that "were emotionally invested in this issue but, from a scientific point of view, after a global look at this, it was not a catastrophe, but it is of concern and we don't want to ignore it."

The Russians, according to Dr. Hollister, have been straightforward in opening some but not all of their files. "Even their members of parliament have said 'We don't have all the answers yet from our military colleagues'," he explained, "so there's a certain amount of frustration amongst them as well as ourselves... There was a strong consensus that we have an open-file look at this legacy of the cold war. The classified data that the military have on both sides should be opened up to the public."

During the past year, Russian reports have revealed additional examples of nuclear dumping — "a few more here and a few more there," Alexi V. Yablokov, whom Dr. Hollister compares to U.S. Vice President Al Gore — something like the environment president of Russia — was charged by Boris Yeltsin with preparing a status report. "That report was brought to this meeting by cabinet, minister-and-parliament-level individuals, and a free and open exchange took place," Dr. Hollister explained.

Scientists believe they now know 80-90 per cent of what has been dumped and they don't see any reason to suspect that fish or any of the other living resources are in grave danger from radioactive materials.

Yet Dr. Hollister noted that a tremendous amount of pollution has taken place in the Arctic region in the shallow bays and estuaries. Potential riverborne transport into the Arctic is a major concern, he said. "There's a lot of stuff in the rivers and dammed-up regions that drain into rivers that, if allowed to head to the Arctic, could change the picture substantially... Another future source of concern is likely



Norwegian authorities have decided it would be too dangerous to raise the Russian nuclear submarine Komsomolsk which sank in 1989 (WNL photo)

to be the submarines that are tied up at the shallow docks and their military establishments, which will have to be defueled and decommissioned."

"There are a lot of toxic materials that are relatively short-lived that have to be gotten rid of, so we are not sanguine about the future. We're very concerned that there's a lot to be taken care of, but the cause for alarm right now is way overstated," Dr. Hollister says. "If you had to set up some priorities, I think some chemical wastes that are being dumped into our ground-water that come from what we call non-point sources along the coastal regions — runoff from farms and factories into drainage ditches and sewage outfalls — pose more of a concern."

"I would suspect that our best bet would be to let the punishment fit the crime. There are other major issues that really need to have attention. We don't drink seawater. We drink fresh water," he argued. "The atrocities that we are perpetrating against our groundwater are really serious — and it's a diminishing resource."

On the other hand, oceans — based on preliminary data and the findings of the conference — seem to have a fairly high tolerance for radioactive material and they seem to assimilate most of it. The radioactive materials hang onto clay particles, and the clay particles, by the force of gravity, go to the bottom and tend to stay. "There's a natural scrubbing mechanism in the ocean that we might find interesting to study,"

he explained.

Oceans also have vast dilution potential. "We still have a lot to learn about concentration effects within the biological system, but we haven't yet seen any of the stuff (nuclear waste) concentrated in the muscles and tissues of fish caught right next to the sources of radioactivity," Dr. Hollister said. "There was a consensus that before we went mucking about trying to clean up some of this mess, we should think about the relative impact of cleaning up versus leaving it there: If you pick it up and stir it and it's broken and leaking and we haul it up from the bottom and put it on a ship, then what do we do with it? Most of us felt that you've got to leave it there but monitor it."

The scientists agreed "that we should keep watchdog on it." Billions of dollars are not necessary right now to clean up the mess, Dr. Hollister says. "In fact, there were some serious suggestions by a number of countries that we simply leave this stuff where it is, that maybe it isn't such a bad place after all."

"One of the proposals put forward by the Russians was that we establish a whole new regime, a whole new organisational structure to take care of this," Dr. Hollister said. "We all agreed that there are plenty of organisations that could be beefed up to take care of this problem." For example, the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, the London Dumping Convention, the Intergovernmental Maritime Organisation, the U.N. Environ-

mental Programme or the World Health Organisation.

The monitoring will have to be done by experts in ocean engineering who can design instruments able to reach the bottom of oceans and measure what needs to be measured during a designated period, Dr. Hollister said. "The public will decide where it wants to spend its money, but if they ask the advice of the scientists, they will probably say that nuclear material in the ocean is not a particularly good place to put billions of dollars." The preferred alternative would be to monitor one or two sites, looking at them every three to five years.

If you take all the geological features available on planet Earth, Dr. Hollister said, the one that stands out as having the very highest capacity to retain the most toxic of these radioactive isotopes turns out to be the deep-sea, fine-grained clays that cover about half the planet.

Between 1974 and 1986, the U.S. and seven other countries — Woods Hole was one of about 30 institutions involved — were studying the feasibility of isolating high-level, radioactive waste into submarine geologic formations. In 1988, the eight countries agreed on paper that the deep-sea clay formations would provide one of the better barriers to contamination.

"There's no doubt that we all felt that the deep-sea clay formations held great potential to iso-

late high-level waste from the biosphere forever," Dr. Hollister said. "A simple calculation based on very conservative estimates would say that if you put plutonium, one of the worst of the bad contaminants and a major component of weapons, about 100 feet below the mud — which is an easy thing to do, just letting it free fall into the sediment, which is very soft sticky sediment like toothpaste — it would take about 100 million years to leak out. And, of course, in 100 million years, it is all decayed."

"Those calculations have stood the test of time," Dr. Hollister added. "But the programme was canceled... after the U.S. Department of Energy decided against it." The scientists that worked on it, including Dr. Hollister, judged that the deep-sea clay formations could be a very useful medium for the permanent disposal — or recovery, if desired — of high-level nuclear waste.

The problem of how to dispose of nuclear waste will only increase, Dr. Hollister said. "As long as we want to have electric power, we're going to have nuclear waste," Dr. Hollister said philosophically. "We're not going to have oil forever. The civilian use of nuclear power is an important component of our power-hungry supply." He added, "I'm not too sanguine about some of our reactors. Each one was almost a one-of-a-kind design... Instead of just pumping out a lot of jeeps, we pumped out one



Dr. Charles Hollister

Cadillac, one Ferrari — it's hard to have a garage to take care of all those different cars."

"The Soviet reactors and their safety records and their efforts to protect human health have, in the past, and continue to be of much lower quality," Dr. Hollister added. "I am concerned about

nuclear power, and power dependency on nuclear designs needs a lot of work." He says a good place to spend money is on cleaning up "dirty" reactors, making new ones all of a similar design and increasing safety standards and inspection routines — World News Link.

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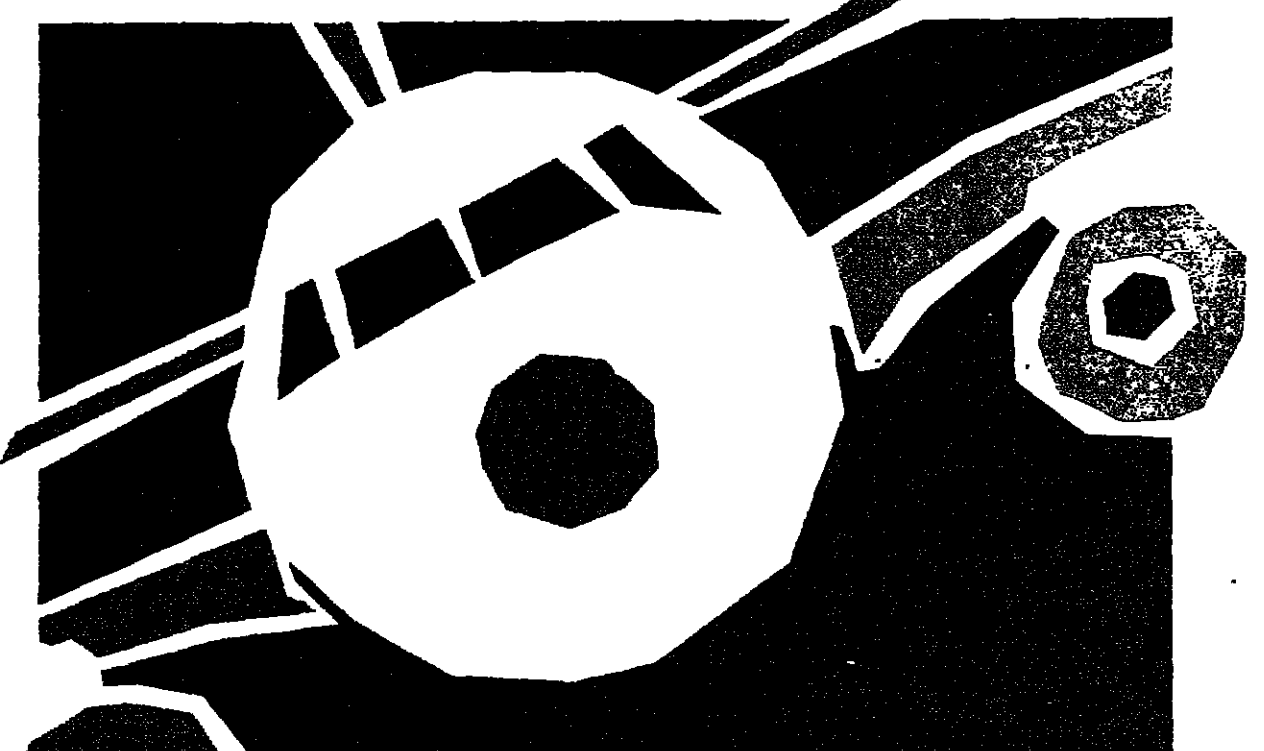
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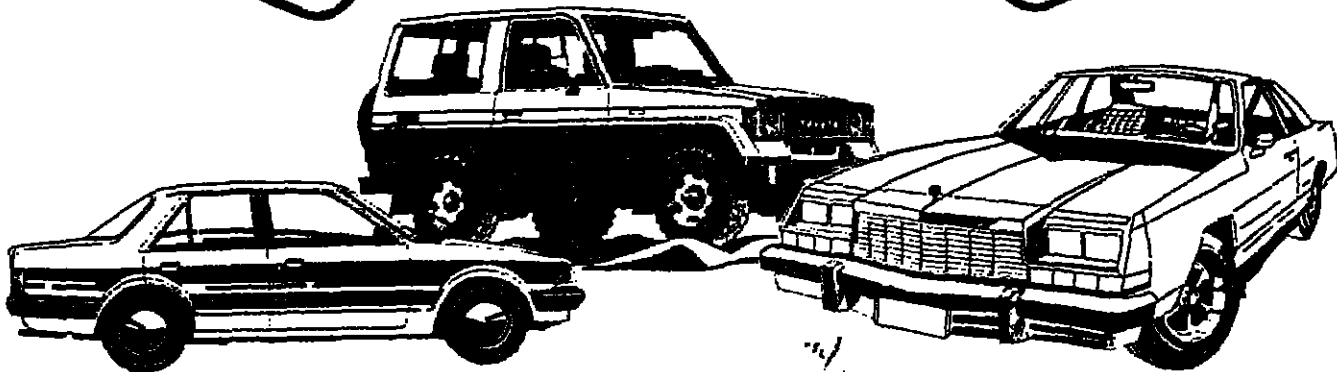
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OAPEC sees developing countries as future market for Arab oil

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Developing countries will become the main importers of Arab oil in the long run as demand is expected to slow down in industrial states, according to an official Arab study.

"Consumption of oil in the industrial states has reached a level of saturation and growth in demand will decline whether the proposed carbon taxes are imposed or not," said the latest monthly bulletin of the Cairo-based Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

"At the same time, many relatively poor nations will push

their way into the next century with attempts to improve their economies, especially those countries which have made headway in development by relying on free market incentives and attracting investment," the report said.

"These countries will provide the fastest growing markets for petroleum products, especially in the transport sector," he added.

The study, obtained Sunday, said only 20 per cent of the current 400 million cars in the world are in the developing countries while nearly 40 per cent are in the United States and 30 per cent in other industrial nations.

"One of the future scenarios expects the total cars in the world to increase to one billion by the year 2020, of which half will be in the developing countries," the Arabic language bulletin said.

Oil demand in developing countries currently accounts for around 18 million barrels per day (b/d), nearly 27 per cent of the total. In the industrial states, consumption is estimated at 40 million b/d.

The European Community has remained the top importer of Arab oil and regional producers fear its proposed carbon tax will hurt demand and further depress their earnings, already sharply

down because of weak oil prices.

"Oil producers do not have prior concepts of what will happen and they lack a strategy for joint action," said OAPEC, which groups Saudi Arabia and nine other key Arab oil producers.

"The present crisis facing oil states requires cooperation to lay down a common ground where they can assess reserves and plans to develop them, and consequently come out with a flexible system of production quotas that match market needs and revenues of producers," OAPEC pointed out.

Azerbaijan resists pressure for new rouble zone

BAKU, Azerbaijan (R) — War, unrest, rebellions, refugees and coups have been Azerbaijan's lot since it left the former Soviet Union in 1991, but it does not want to be drawn back into dependence on Moscow.

However, Russia's July currency reform — scrapping pre-1993 rouble banknotes — has put new pressure on the southern state to do just that, Finance Minister Salih Mamedov said in a recent interview.

The July move effectively killed off the old shared Soviet rouble and brought in a Russian currency.

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan have agreed to set up a new rouble zone, accepting Russian monetary control. But Mr. Mamedov said Azerbaijan was unlikely to follow suit.

"I think it would be hard for us to go into this new rouble zone, although until the government takes a final decision it's just my opinion," Mr. Mamedov said. "I don't think we should go in. It envisages control by the Russian Central Bank over all reserves, interest rates and banknotes. This would not allow the implementation of our autonomous economic and financial policy."

Like many other ex-Soviet republics, oil-producing Azerbaijan brought out its own currency in its first year of independence. The manat worth 10 roubles, was used in tandem with the ex-Soviet unit.

But plans to dump the rouble altogether were delayed several times. Mr. Mamedov said the latest deadline — Sept. 1 — would not be met either.

He said Azerbaijan was trying to avoid accepting the card Moscow was forcing on it and, instead, to go on laying solid foundations for a move to a manat-only economy later.

He said inflation ago, half Russia's monthly rate.

The huge expense of the war, and the upkeep of hundreds of thousands of refugees, is offset by

dwindling but still substantial oil income from Soviet-era offshore fields.

Work has started on creating a dollar-manat interbank exchange and reserves are being put aside to back a new currency. "Reserves so far aren't very big, about \$50 million, but we are gradually adding to that," he said.

Western diplomats say Azerbaijan will need about \$200 million to back its currency. But there is no reason the country, with assets including huge oil reserves off its Caspian Sea coast, should not be able to create a big enough fund.

Mr. Mamedov said the main obstacle to the step-by-step changeover was the chaotic political situation, which has made international financial organisations wary of helping Azerbaijan with a stabilisation fund and balance of payments support.

"If we had a bit of support from the International Monetary Fund ... we could get out of this position very quickly," he said. Armenians from the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh have taken control of the enclave and large tracts of Azerbaijan in a series of military victories.

But Mr. Mamedov said he had high hopes of a economic union between former Soviet republics. Unlike the new rouble zone, this would benefit republics economically without threatening their sovereignty. Payments between republics would be made by converting domestic currencies, rather than using roubles as a common currency.

"We should join it," he said. "Our economies are all closely integrated and cutting those links in the last two years has led to factories closing. More than a third of the falls in production here are linked to our cutting off ties with other republics. If there is an economic union, we'll be able to put that right and steady production."

Washington says U.S. only major country where labour cost dropped last year

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States was the only major industrial country where there was a drop last year in the cost of an hour's factory labour, the government has said.

Compared with 12 competitors, including Japan and Germany, employers' labour costs in the U.S. have been falling steadily since 1985, according to figures released by the Labour Department. The decrease has amounted to 62 percentage points.

The figure reflects changes both in pay and productivity. So it gives an indication of the advantage gained by U.S. employers in competition with those of other countries.

The 1985-92 period also saw a sharp decline in the price of the U.S. dollar, compared with other currencies. A smaller decline in U.S. labour cost — 13 percentage points — appears when costs are measured in each country's own currency.

The department's Bureau of Labour Statistics made its figures available only in percentages, not in actual money.

Measured in U.S. dollars, Canada's labour costs dropped by

5.2 per cent last year but that was only because of the drop in the price of the Canadian dollar. Measured in national currencies, the costs in the United States showed the only drop — 1.5 per cent, and Canada's cost was flat.

In dollar terms, Japan had the biggest cost increase for the year — 18.3 per cent. Other increases ranged from Taiwan's 12.4 per cent to South Korea's 5.1 per cent. West Germany had a 12 per cent increase; the figures take no account of unification with the former East Germany.

The average output per hour of American workers rose by 4.6 per cent — a rate exceeded among 11 major countries only by Britain, 5.1 per cent, and Sweden, 4.7 per cent.

Japan was only one of the 11 to show a decline in average hourly output. Its 6.2 per cent drop was largely due to decline in output, the Bureau commented. "Labour hours were reduced by only one per cent."

The result may reflect the widespread practice in Japan of keeping workers on the payroll even when there is little work for them.

Matsushita claims flat TV break through

TOKYO (R) — Japan's Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. unveiled a briefcase-shaped television screen Monday it hopes will revolutionise television and said mass production would reduce its price to less than twice that of present TV tubes.

The new screen makes it possible to build a 14-inch (36-cm) television set less than 10 cm (four inches) thick. Industry analysts shown a prototype set said its picture looked as good as that on a regular TV.

When it first hits the market this October in Japan, each flat vision television will cost a whopping 288,000 yen (\$2,770).

But Matsushita engineers said the hefty price was due to low production volume, not any particular difficulties in manufacturing the screens.

They plan initially to make only 1,000 screens a month. When they reach mass production, the price is expected to come down to between 1.5 and two times that of the cathode ray tubes that go into regular television sets. These now cost about \$200 — a similar size.

The company expects large-scale production to begin in the next few years but gave no timetable.

"Cathode ray tubes are made by the million," Keisuke Yamamoto, director of Matsushita's TV research laboratory, told a news conference.

A technique called electrostatic deflection permits the 10,000 picture units in the screen to be activated without the long "throw" needed by conventional electron guns.

Yeltsin vetoes Russia's anti-Western banking law

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin has vetoed a banking law threatening to clamp down on foreign banks in Russia, Interfax News Agency said Monday.

Mr. Yeltsin has sent the act, passed by parliament in July but yet to become law, back to the Soviet-era legislature for reconsideration saying it puts "unjust limits on foreign banks."

The act urges offshore foreign banking rules and orders the central bank to review licences it has already issued — to French banks Credit Lyonnais and Societe Generale, joint U.S. and German Dresdner Bank A.G. and French Banque Nationale de Paris, Z. Laenderbank Austria A.G. and Bank of China.

A presidential veto can be overruled by a two-thirds parliamentary majority.

Parliament wants all foreign bank licences cancelled by January if not renewed by December. It orders the central bank to limit number of foreign banks authorised to deal with Russian firms with export/import licences.

It also vows to restrict foreign bank services in Russia in 1994 and 1995 to those for foreigners only.

Russia, with over 1,600 local banks, has a strong anti-Western banking lobby which wants foreign banks at bay and fears competition.

Other foreign banks queuing up for a full licence include two of the biggest U.S. banks, Chase Manhattan and Citicorp, as well as to Switzerland's Credit Suisse and Turkish Garanti Bank.

Existing foreign bank legislation caps the amount of foreign banks with capital and geographical limits. It limits the total capital of all foreign banks in Russia at 12 per cent of that of all Russian banks, many of whom are undercapitalised.

French baby-boomers face raw deal on retirement

PARIS (R) — French baby-boomers, a generation imbued with the fun-first, work-later ethics of the 1960s, will face a raw deal on retirement.

Under new pension laws quietly enacted this weekend, and to come into effect on Jan. 1, people born after 1948 will have to work harder and longer than generations born in the 1930s if they hope for a prosperous old age.

This may seem tough, yet the new legislation passed by Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's government after only five months in power is being hailed as a major victory for the survival of the French welfare system, seen as one of the world's best.

"The government has shown

enormous political courage," the conservative Le Figaro daily said Monday. "This is the most extraordinary economic and social feat yet staged by the Balladur administration," said the leftwing daily Liberation.

The law will gradually increase the number of years needed to be worked to earn a full pension from 37.5 to 40. It also increases to 25 from 10 the number of so-called "best years" of salary that are averaged out to provide the basis of calculation for pensions.

This effectively means that the current generation of French "forty-somethings" will have to work beyond the legal retiring age of 60 to take home a full pension.

Trade unions and leftwing parties, who warmly backed the 1983 decision by the former ruling socialists to stop work at 60, have not chided Mr. Balladur over his new law.

"A social monument has collapsed without a whisper," said Liberation.

Why? Because retirement funds were so far in the red that the whole system was at threat. The fund is expected to show a deficit of 60 billion francs (more than \$10 billion) by next year.

The reasons are the same the world over. The fall in mortality coupled with the rise in unemployment has meant fewer people working to support a growing number of pensioners.

Mutual fund surge poses dangers for U.S. policymakers

WASHINGTON (R) — A huge transfer of individual Americans' wealth over the past few years from the relative safety of banks and pension funds into volatile stock and bond markets is making Wall Street money managers nervous.

They worry that Washington policymakers and regulators worldwide are paying too little attention to what will happen if today's heated markets reverse course.

"You would have a lot of people with a lot of red ink sitting around a lot of living rooms in America," said Robert Johnson, managing director of Soros Fund Management.

Never before have so many people's individual assets, much of it saved for retirement in mutual funds or pension plans, been invested directly in the financial markets.

And never before has technology allowed investors to move massive sums of money so quickly when markets change course.

Together the two factors are a volatile mix.

Officials at the Federal Re-

serve Bank — the Fed — say there are no formal studies under way on how this concentration of personal assets in the stock and bond markets would affect the financial system during a prolonged or deep market slump.

But they plan down any suggestion that a shift of money out of the Fed-regulated banking system is eroding the central bank's traditional power to influence the course of financial or monetary events.

By June 30, mutual funds' assets swelled to \$1.8 trillion, almost matching the \$2 trillion held in bank deposits and up from \$1.1 trillion in mutual funds at the beginning of 1990.

This has helped push prices in the stock and bond markets to record highs this year.

Three factors are behind the

switch of private money to market investments from secure income-producers.

Most talked about are the low yields on bank deposits. But a study by Raddon Financial Group found that only eight per cent of maturing bank deposits are being transferred to mutual funds.

Another big influx of money is coming from companies that are replacing pension funds, which guarantee monthly cheques for retired people, with plans under which individuals invest their retirement savings directly in stock and bond funds.

In addition, insurance companies have stepped up sales of variable annuities, the returns for which fluctuate with market performance, in place of products offering fixed payouts.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY AUGUST 31, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation.

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This evening's Full Blue Moon in Pisces opposes the Virgo Sun so be sure you have all the information you need to put that new idea into orbit and that you have handled all objections from other sources.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Consider well how you can best put some new ideas into motion and then you will be able to express them in a charming and well thought out manner.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A problem at home that is taking a while to solve can be finished early and then you will be able to invite those you want to know for some time into your home.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A delayed communication seems to hold you up for awhile but soon this passes and you are able to get across to others what you expect of them.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You expect some material benefit and as soon as it arrives you will be able to put in motion a plan whereby you can increase your income.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) After making an improvement in your personal appearance you will be able to gain the various personal conditions that mean the most to you at this time.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You feel a limitation that you

think holds you back from getting the pleasures you desire but go after them in a brave manner and they are yours.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Forget past interests that have not been satisfactory and concentrate upon a new set of conditions that can be developed into an overwhelming interest.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) An older person seems to be keeping you from getting some public matter off the ground but persist in good humour and you can win over circumstances.

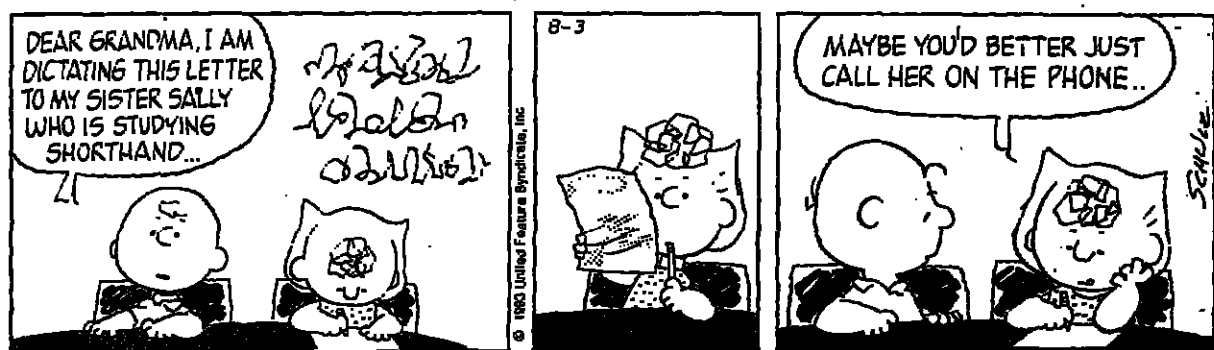
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Holding on to the past will not bring you the greatest success you desire so be more openminded to accepting change, new beginnings.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) After you have attended a longstanding obligation you will find you will be able to see your way clear to having a greater abundance.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A delay in some worldly activity should not keep you from extracting the fullest possible potential benefits that can come to you from outside interests.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Think about what you can do to get rid of a worrisome method on your job and be on the alert for new ways of doing what also are more attractive.

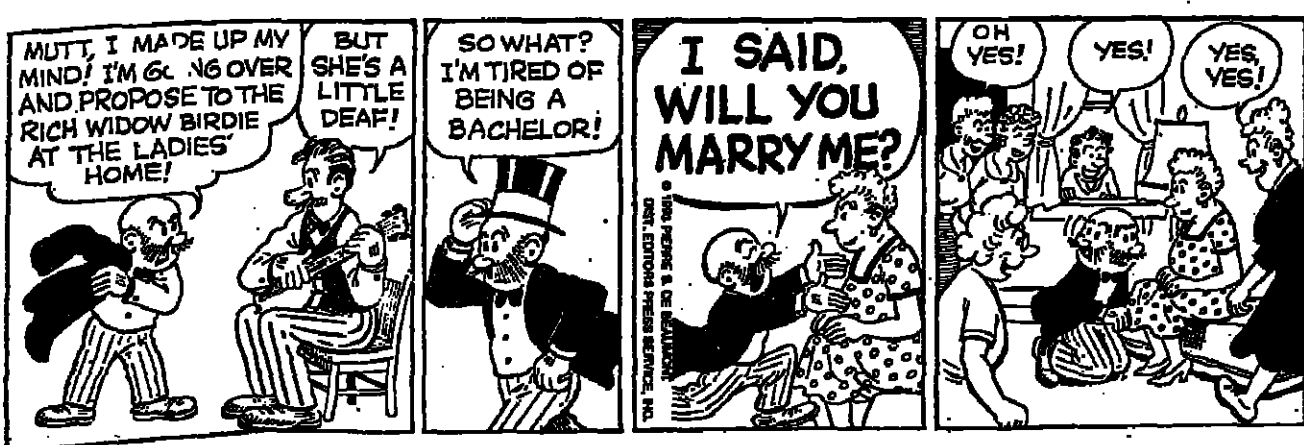
Peanuts



Andy Capp



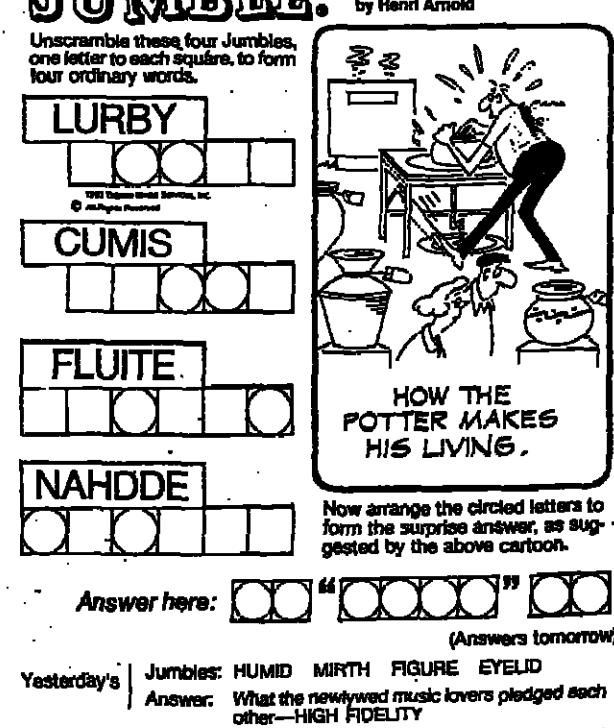
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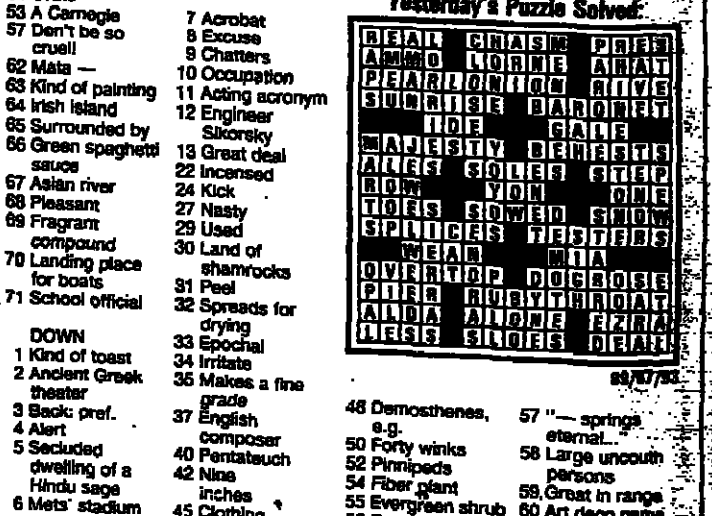
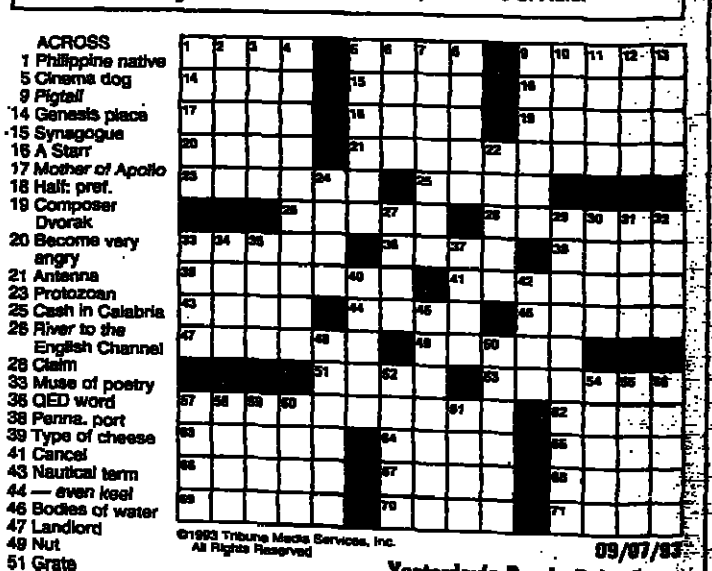
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JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold



THE Daily Crossword by Florence C. Adler



Israeli government sells 22.4% of Bank Leumi

TEV AVIV (R) — Israel's government Sunday sold 22.4 per cent of its shares in Bank Leumi, continuing its privatisation of major banks.

The offer was oversubscribed 500 times, bankers and traders said.

If all warrants attached to the shares — exercisable in seven and ten months — are used, it will reduce the government stake to 72.6 per cent from 95 per cent, treasury sources said.

The issue raised about 500 million shekels (\$174.53 million) cash for the government immediately. Another 600 million shekels (\$209.42 million) will go to the government if all warrants are exercised.

Bank Leumi's 1992 assets totalled \$28.4 billion.

Ten years ago the government had to step in and indirectly buy shares in the country's biggest

banks — Bank Hapoalim, Bank Leumi, Israel Discount Bank and Bank Mizrahi — after their value collapsed.

Investigations showed the banks had routinely manipulated the value of their own shares. Under the "bank shares arrangement," the state planned to sell the shares back to the public within ten years.

In the first sale under the agreement, the government sold 20 per cent of its shares in Bank Hapoalim, the country's largest bank, in May. In June it sold 60 per cent of Union Bank, jointly owned by the government and Bank Leumi, to a group of private investors.

The sale of Union, a tiny institution compared with the "big four," was a first step toward applying reforms to the larger banks aimed at curbing their power.

Privatisation seen vital for India's reforms

BOMBAY (R) — Privatisation of India's state-dominated industry is vital to sustain the country's economic reforms and involvement of foreign companies is essential, a senior business leader has said.

"Privatisation will help the reforms. First of all, it will send out positive signals about India's commitment to liberalise and globalise its economy," said the president of the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASSCHAM), M.N. Dhuldhoya, in an interview.

Mr. Dhuldhoya said privatisation would recharge the public sector which had not yielded any significant return on investment of about 1,000 billion rupees (\$32 billion) pumped into it since the early 1950s.

"Privatisation will bring in new volumes of capital, state of art technology and international business links," he said.

Faced with a mounting foreign debt of \$71 billion, India launched a bold reform programme in July 1991 in a bid to free an economy shackled by 40 years of socialist dogma.

But the government has so far limited its divestment in 31 state-owned firms to 20 per cent of equity.

Analysts say the funds raised through selling equity to state-owned mutual funds and financial institutions had been used by the government only to bridge its budget deficits.

"Instead of creating assets from an asset, you have really put it into expenditure. The minute you do this, you are more or less accepting the formula that the

new avenues of raising revenues have dried out," Mr. Dhuldhoya said. "By eating up revenues, the government would not be able to repay even its internal debt, estimated to be half the GDP (gross domestic product)."

In this context, India could draw on the experience of Britain, Mexico and Chile on privatisation, Mr. Dhuldhoya said.

Mr. Dhuldhoya called for setting up of a privatisation ministry directly under the prime minister, manned by professionals.

"If need be, the government could even involve consultants from abroad to handle privatisation," he said.

"You can invite specialists involved in privatisation on a global basis and even, at an agreed price, you may be required to hand it over to them," Mr. Dhuldhoya said.

He said privatisation should be carried out on a global scale and involvement of small investors was vital for privatisation.

"I genuinely believe that the interests of the private sector or private small investors is going to be the greatest support to the system of market economy," he said.

Once the small investors had achieved prosperity through equity, their stake in the system would grow bigger, he said.

Analysts believe that India's growing investing population of about 20 million will lap up state sector shares once they are offered to the public.

Mr. Dhuldhoya said the privatisation ministry could draw up a plan for at least 200 enterprises in the next three to four years.

S. Korea to reschedule loans to Russia

SEOUL (R) — South Korea plans to reschedule its loans to Russia following Moscow's default on repayments, a foreign ministry official said Monday.

Vice Foreign Minister Hong Soon-Young told reporters South Korea would freeze the disbursement of the remaining \$1.53 billion portion of a \$3 billion loan and aid package extended to the former Soviet Union just before the two countries established diplomatic relations in September 1990.

Russia, which took over responsibility for the loans after the collapse of the Soviet Union, is in default.

South Korean financial officials will travel to Moscow in September to reschedule the debts.

Mr. Hong said the loan suspension was decided as Moscow no longer wanted further loans from South Korea.

"They (the Russians) have said the interest rates and other conditions on South Korean loans were unfavourable," Mr. Hong said.

South Korean officials said Russia had previously warned it would be unable to repay the

principal and interest on its loans.

South Korea has disbursed \$1 billion in cash to Moscow and \$470 million in tied loans to finance imports of South Korean goods so far.

The finance ministry official said overdue interest on the cash loan totalled \$88 million as of August, while defaulted interest payments on \$470 million tied loans between January and August amounted to about \$14.9 million.

In November 1992, Russia promised to pay off \$36.8 million of the overdue interest on the \$1 billion cash loan with aluminium ingots.

But Russia has sent only \$12.7 million in ingots to South Korea so far.

According to the terms and conditions of the loan agreement, Russia was supposed to repay the principal of the cash loan over a five-year period beginning next year, the official said.

Repayment of the principal of the tied loans was scheduled to begin in November this year, the official said but gave no details on the precise terms.

Zimbabwe jobless rate hits 30 per cent

HARARE (R) — At least 30 per cent of Zimbabwe's workforce is without jobs largely because of poor economic growth and a high birthrate, President Robert Mugabe said Monday.

"The current national unemployment rate of 30 per cent tends to understate the severity of the unemployment problem in the country," Mr. Mugabe said, disclosing the national jobless figure for the first time since he assumed power in 1980.

"Unemployment is highest among those aged between 14 and 25 years. According to a labour force survey carried out by the (government) Central Statistical Office, unemployment amongst youths in this age bracket was found to be as high as 40 per cent in 1986," he told a labour conference in Harare.

Economists said joblessness had worsened since that survey, with only a tiny fraction of Zim-

babwe's 300,000 school leavers annually finding jobs in the formal market.

Zimbabwe's economy crashed nearly 12 per cent last year in the face of the worst drought and recession this century.

Mr. Mugabe noted that the country's annual population growth, estimated by economists at more than three per cent, was partly to blame for the unemployment crisis, which had been worsened recently by tough economic reforms backed by the World Bank.

More than 22,000 workers had been retrenched in both the public and private sectors since the five-year reforms were launched in 1991 to try to promote growth through exports, he said.

Mr. Mugabe urged non-government organisations to work to increase employment in the informal sector and in small-scale industries.

Bumpy road ahead for Japan's car makers

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's auto industry faces a rough road to the next century as soaring production costs, slack demand and pressure from trade partners endanger its traditional strategies.

The expansion strategies that powered the industry to global preeminence, like boosting sales volume while sacrificing short-term profit to gain market share, are becoming impractical because the car makers need to drastically cut costs, according to a recent report by the influential Industrial Bank of Japan.

"The single most important factor driving up costs is the rising yen," Mathew Ruddick, an industry analyst at James Capel Pacific Japan Securities, has said.

A more expensive yen makes Japanese products more costly to overseas consumers and thus less competitive. It also eats into the yen value of profits brought back to Japan.

Automakers are responding by cutting costs and shifting more production out of Japan, analysts say.

The report says Japanese automakers must do both on an unprecedented scale to cope with sinking profits.

Toyota Motor Corp., Japan's biggest car manufacturer, announced Wednesday that its group net profit dropped 26 per cent to 176.46 billion yen (\$1.70 billion) in the fiscal year that ended June 30.

The day before, Honda Motor Co. said its group profit plunged per cent to 6.09 billion yen (\$58.56 million) during the April-June quarter from a year earlier.

"We are making some changes we wouldn't have thought of five years ago, ... like cutting the number of options by 30 per cent," said Toyota spokesman Nobuyuki Eto.

Five years ago, during the height of the consumer frenzy of Japan's so-called "bubble economy," Toyota's Corolla came with 68 different bumper configurations. Now there are only 24 available.

Mr. Ruddick says Japan's auto giants are moving production abroad, but not quickly enough. "They aren't going to be able to do it fast enough to avoid problems over the next two years or so," he said.

The bank report said a greater shift of production abroad can eventually help the automakers cope with changes in exchange rates and reduce trade friction, but the short-term result of the high yen is likely to be a continuation of dismal earnings figures.

The rapid rise in the yen's value has forced Japanese car makers to raise prices faster than the U.S. big three, leading to renewed competition from the U.S. auto giants.

The Japanese currency closed at 104.45 to the dollar in Tokyo Friday, after rising more than 17 per cent since mid-February.

Mr. Eto said every time the dollar's value falls by one yen, his company loses 10 billion yen (\$96.15 million) in profits.

The bank report estimated that, with the shift of production overseas, domestic production will drop to 12.1 million vehicles in fiscal 1995, and 10.9 million by

2000, from 13.5 million in fiscal 1990.

Overseas production is likely to nearly double from four million vehicles in 1990 to 7.9 million in 2000, it said.

The report said the shift will make plant closings at home inevitable, and massive layoffs a very real possibility.

But Japan's car makers beg to differ.

"Nobody is going to get fired," Toyota's Eto said.

He said all of Japan's major automakers will be able to reduce their work forces through attrition, voluntary early retirement and transfers.

Regardless of how soon the Japanese companies adjust to the change in exchange rates, though, a host of long-term problems threaten to keep earnings low into the next century, said the report.

Expensive environmental and safety requirements and pressure to cut exports are also growing, the report said.

In addition, demand for autos in Japan and abroad isn't increasing as explosively as it used to, requiring fundamental changes in the structure of Japan's auto industry, the report said.

In a separate report Japanese car-maker Nissan said it was considering cutting back its production in Britain in 1993 because of a fall in the continental European car market.

A spokesman at the Nissan plant in Sunderland, northern England, said the company was strongly considering a reduction in output, but no definite decision

would be taken until October.

The car maker initially planned output of 270,000 cars from its British factory. Opened in 1986, it currently produces the Primera and Micra models, exporting 80 per cent of its production. Production reached 175,000 cars in 1992.

Though new car sales have risen in Britain since the end of 1992, they have fallen in continental Europe, forcing many manufacturers, including Ford, Vauxhall and Peugeot, to cutback on production.

In the first seven months of 1993, total British car production was 6.6 per cent higher than in the same period of 1992, thanks mainly to the opening of new British factories by Honda and Toyota.

One week ago, Nissan said in Tokyo that the poor outlook for Japanese demand could force it to cut its production plans there for the first six months ending March 1994.

As part of the measures to cope with rising domestic production costs and the higher yen, Nissan Motor Co., Japan's second-largest automaker, has said it will start importing vehicles from Mexico.

Each month, the company will import about 3,000 ad vans assembled in Mexico, with sales in Japan scheduled to start in December, said Nissan spokesman Koji Okuda.

Currently, Nissan sells 5,000 ad vans a month in Japan at 812,000-1,412,000 yen (\$7,850 to \$13,655).

UAE expanding major gas plant to meet demand

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has launched a major project to expand its main onshore gas processing plant to boost income and meet growing demand, an official report has said.

The project will more than triple production capacity at Habshan plant from 540 million cubic feet (16.2 million cubic metre) per day to 1.86 billion cubic feet (55.8 million cubic metre) per day when it is completed by the end of 1995, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) said.

ADNOC, 60 per cent owned by the Abu Dhabi government, did not mention the cost of the project but oil sources put it at around \$2 billion.

The first phase of the project, involving engineering and designs, was completed in 1992 while the second phase has just been launched. It has been awarded to Bechtel Inc. and the Paris-based Technip and includes detailed engineering and construction, ADNOC said in its bulletin.

"The main objectives of the project are to meet the increased gas demand, boost revenue, preserve reservoir condition by reinjection of gas and protect the environment," the bulletin said.

Most of the UAE's natural gas as well as liquefied gas is exported to Japan and the rest is consumed locally. Another \$1 billion project is underway to double output at the gas liquefaction plant on Das island to cater for the growing needs of its Japanese clients.

Gas supplies for Habshan plant, around 200 kilometres southwest of Abu Dhabi, come from the nearby Bab field, one of the biggest gas fields in the world. The field, which also includes billions of barrels of oil, is also being expanded, according to ADNOC.

Bab field has an area of around 1,200 square kilometre (465 square mile), almost 16 times that of Abu Dhabi city, and it includes 155 producing wells in its three oil and gas zones.

"The Habshan project is part of a trend where the world is shifting more towards the utilisation of natural gas as an alternative pollution-free fuel," said ADNOC, which is also owned by British Petroleum, the French Total and other Western and Japanese oil companies.

"The project will allow ADNOC to fulfil its long-term commitments for gas export as well as local needs. It will also give ADNOC the flexibility to deal with the international market of oil and gas."

The UAE is already a major oil and gas producer and its crude and gas reserves are estimated at 98 billion barrels and 186.6 trillion cubic feet.

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Azerbaijan requests indefinite postponement of Karabakh talks

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Scheduled negotiations on the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh have been indefinitely postponed at Azerbaijan's request, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman said Monday.

An Azerbaijani government spokesman said the request had been made because of Sunday's referendum in the republic which confirmed the ouster of fugitive Azerbaijani President Abulfaz Elchibey and the people's confidence in acting president and former Communist leader Geidar Aliyev.

The negotiations, held under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), were to have begun Monday in the framework of the year-old Minsk process preparing for a peace conference between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Azerbaijan has in recent months suffered a series of military setbacks over the mountainous territory populated mostly by Armenians but which is part of Azerbaijan.

Armenian forces currently control the entire enclave as well as "security zones" in southwestern Azerbaijan proper. More than 10,000 people have been killed and many more displaced in the five-year war over the territory.

Fighting Sunday died down as

the Armenian fighters were poised to reach Zangelan, in southwestern Azerbaijan, which would enable the separatists to control the whole region as far as the Iranian border.

The international community has condemned the Armenian advances into Azerbaijani territory, although Moscow has maintained a low profile on the issue.

But a special envoy of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, Vladimir Kazimirov, has been trying in recent days to arrange a set of direct negotiations between Baku and the Armenian separatists from Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Minsk group, led by Italian diplomat Mario Raffaelli, involves nine mediating countries: Belarus, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the United States.

Meanwhile, the separatist leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh said it was ready to hold talks on the problem of refugees who have left their homes as a result of the latest offensives.

In a statement published in the territory's main town Stepanakert, the authorities denied their troops had "made advances into the south-west region of Azerbaijan" over the past few days.

The statement blames Azerbaijan troops for violating a cease-

fire agreement following "disagreements within the Azerbaijani command."

Stepanakert also denounced the "noisy (Azeri) propaganda campaign to the effect that large numbers of people are leaving the border regions of Nagorno-Karabakh."

The statement stressed that Armenian refugees in the northern regions of Shaumian and Mardakert represented "about 20 per cent of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh whereas the Azeri refugees only represent five per cent of the population of Azerbaijan."

Tens of thousands of refugees have fled their homes in the regions of Fizuli, Dzhubail and Zangelan in southwestern Azerbaijan over the past few days.

Acting Azerbaijani President Geidar Aliyev is poised to call for military intervention by Russia in the ongoing war with Armenian separatists, Azeri nationalist groups claimed Sunday.

In a joint communiqué received by AFP in Ankara, the National Association of Azerbaijan accused Mr. Aliyev of being "Russia's puppet."

The acting head of state was "preparing the ground for the entry of the Russian army into Azerbaijan by declaring that the Azerbaijani army has been

fleeing the Armenians," the statement said.

The groups added that Mr. Aliyev wanted the country to become a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States to "allow the Russians to enter Azerbaijan."

Both groups are allied with the Azerbaijani Popular Front led by Mr. Elchibey.

The communiqué claimed the plebiscite was a coup attempt orchestrated by Mr. Aliyev.

Meanwhile the referendum on the political future of Azerbaijan's fugitive president marked the culmination of a long climb back to power by Mr. Aliyev.

More than 90 per cent of the electorate voted Sunday and hardly anyone leaving Baku's polling stations said they had answered anything but "no" to the single question: "Do you have confidence in President Abulfaz Elchibey?"

Asked how they had voted, about two dozen people in different parts of the city revealed the real significance of the referendum. "I voted for Aliyev," they said.

Results had yet to be announced, but even supporters of Mr. Elchibey's Popular Front movement who refused to vote said they had lost faith in the stricken country's official president.

400 feared dead in China dam disaster

PEKING (R) — More than 400 people were feared dead after a dam burst in China's remote western province of Qinghai sending torrents of water crashing down on nearby villages, officials said Monday.

Some 263 were confirmed dead after Friday's disaster and at least 180 were still missing, a local police official said by telephone.

"More bodies may still be under water or in the wreckage... it is very hard to have a final figure now," he said.

A spokesman at the regional flood prevention office said the official confirmed death toll was 223 but that it would probably rise as rescue work continued in Gonghe County, about 100 kilometres west of the provincial capital of Xining.

"People are still working hard," the spokesman said. "Both the army and the police have hundreds of people at the scene."

Water breached the 60-metre Gouhou reservoir dam late Friday, unleashing torrents of water on small peasant communities downstream.

At least 330 people were receiving medical treatment and

many others were believed to have been affected, a provincial government spokesman said by telephone.

The break in the dam, which officials said was about 10 years old, hit one of China's most remote areas, where a mixed population of Chinese and Tibetans struggle to coax a living from arid plateau.

The Gonghe area was hit by a destructive earthquake in 1990 and is believed to lie close to seismic fault lines.

"It is not exactly in the same place, but (the quake) may have had some effect," the government spokesman said.

Preliminary estimates put economic losses from the dam burst at more than 100 million yuan (\$17 million) — a serious blow for one of China's poorest regions.

The reservoir, which has a capacity of 3.3 million cubic metres (116.5 million cubic feet) of water, was holding about 2.6 million cubic metres (92 million cubic feet) when the burst occurred, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

"A big hole split open and the water rushed out, washing away

several villages," a local hospital worker quoted local television as saying Sunday.

On Monday morning the reservoir was empty, the county police office said.

The Qinghai government spokesman said more than 1,000 homes had been flooded and 26 work units, including state factories and collective enterprises, had been hit by the dam waters.

Qinghai, most of which is formed by an arid and inhospitable plateau, is famous as one of the main locations of China's "reform through labour" prison camps, where inmates are put to hard physical work under the ever-watchful eyes of guards.

The provincial government spokesman said, however, that these camps had not been affected by the dam burst.

"They are in a different sector. They are all operating normally," he said.

Liu Jimin, a senior cabinet official, arrived in the area Sunday to oversee rescue work involving several thousand soldiers and members of China's Paramilitary Police, the spokesman said.

Nigeria heads for shutdown as strike takes hold

LAGOS (R) — Nigeria ground to a halt Monday as an indefinite general strike called to protest the installation of an unelected government began to bite.

Transport was paralysed in the main city Lagos as a year long fuel shortage combined with the strike to force public buses off the road.

"I have no fuel in the bus so I cannot go anywhere," said bus driver Lateef Oyewole.

His type of bus called "molu" provides nearly half the public transport service in this city of six million people.

At Nigeria's main oil terminal in Bonny in the southeast, loading was being done only in the daytime, oil industry sources said Sunday.

The strike was called by the umbrella trade union organisation Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the vital oil workers group NUPENG to protest against the former military government's failure to fully return Nigeria to democracy.

NUPENG said it wanted power transferred to business tycoon Moshood Abiola, the unofficial winner of last June's presidential election annulled by former military President Ibrahim Babangida.

Mr. Abiola plans to return from abroad by the end of this week to form his government and the new government of Ernest Shoneka has warned it would regard that as rebellion.

Gen. Babangida quit the army and the presidency Thursday and handed over to industrialist Shonekan.

At a news conference, Shonekan said he would not return to power until the military government had fully returned Nigeria to democracy.

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CAPTURED REBELS: Five of 13 members of the Shining Path guerrilla group recently captured by the military are presented to the press. The 13 guerrillas were arrested in connection with the Aug. 20 massacre by rebels of at least 59 Ashaninka Indians in the Mazamari of Peru (AFP photo)

2,000 rebels killed in offensive — Angola

LUANDA (R) — Angolan government forces pushing towards the rebel capital Huambo in the central highlands killed more than 2,000 UNITA rebel fighters over the past week, the government newspaper Jornal De Angola said Monday.

The newspaper quoted a military source as saying the casualties were inflicted on three fronts in battles for the towns of Tchijenje, Monte Belo, Balombo and Quilengues.

Jornal De Angola quoted its sources as saying the dead included a UNITA general, known by his nom de guerre "katu".

Government forces are advancing on Huambo along two main roads from the Atlantic coast in a major offensive. Other columns are moving into the southern fringes of the central highlands from the southern city of Lubango.

Jornal De Angola quoted its

source as saying the forces advancing from the coast had been fighting for several days in Ukuma, a town less than 100 kilometres west of Huambo, which fell to UNITA in March.

UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) has been fighting a bush war against the government since independence in 1975. A peace agreement signed in 1991 fell apart last year.

Meanwhile, aid workers said hundreds of Angolans are dying each week in an agonising war that has failed to capture the attention of a world community focused on carnage in Bosnia and Somalia.

"The number of civilians suffering from effects of the war is just as great as in Bosnia," said James Fennell of the humanitarian organisation care, visiting villages near the central highland town of Ganda traumatised by fighting.

"We can prevent another Somalia. If we get food in now we won't have mass starvation like in Somalia and Ethiopia."

Aid workers complain that the deaths of tens of thousands of Angolans in the 11 months since UNITA rebels took up arms again after their electoral defeat last year have been eclipsed by greater world interest in Bosnia and Somalia.

In the villages near Ganda, children in rags and bloated bellies showed signs of chronic and severe malnutrition. A young girl struggled to stay on her feet. Heavy artillery fire rang out from several kilometres away, a reminder of more deaths to come.

No one knows for sure how many people have died from direct or indirect effects of the war. But many diplomats and aid workers believe at least 50,000 have perished so far.

Thais see new offensive against rebels

BANGKOK (R) — Soldiers of the unified army of Cambodia's interim coalition government are poised to renew their drive against Khmer Rouge guerrillas, a Thai military spokesman said Monday.

"Strong military movements by the government soldiers and the Khmer Rouge guerrillas indicate that the fighting will break out soon," Lieutenant-General Anusorn Krisanaserani told a news conference.

"We have instructed the Thai Armed Forces on the border to deal with the situation," he said.

Gen. Anusorn said Thai soldiers had been instructed to keep the fighting on their side of the border and to retaliate with tough action if shells fell on Thailand.

Thai soldiers south of the bor-

der town of Aranyaprathet fired eight mortar bombs towards Cambodian mortar positions on Sunday to stop a duel that had resulted in several rounds landing inside Thailand, witnesses said.

Over 1,000 Khmer Rouge guerrillas and their followers fled over the Thai border when government troops overran a major Khmer Rouge logistics base in northwest Banteay Meanchey province two weeks ago.

About 2,000 government soldiers from the Khmer Peoples Liberation Front, former guerrilla allies of the Khmer Rouge, took part in the assault.

Their commander, General Khoun Rouen subsequently accused the Thai military of helping to evacuate the Khmer Rouge to nearby safe areas.

Gen. Anusorn said Thai troops near the border had been instructed to prepare holding centres for Cambodian civilians and soldiers who might flee from fighting into Thailand.

He said they would not be turned over to Phnom Penh authorities as had been demanded by the interim government there.

Meanwhile, leaders of Cambodia's interim government flew Monday to meet Prince Norodom Sihanouk in North Korea to try and finalise a new constitution that could lead to the restoration of the monarchy.

Prince Sihanouk, the restored head of state and former god-king, is currently staying in Pyongyang as guest of the Communist leadership there and will pursue the draft national constitution being brought to him.

Last Russians to leave Lithuania by Tuesday

VILNIUS (Agencies) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has promised that the last remaining 2,500 Russian soldiers still in Lithuania will have left the Baltic republic by Tuesday, the Lithuanian president said Monday.

Speaking on Vilnius Radio, President Algirdas Brazauskas said that "tomorrow there will be a farewell ceremony" for the last

remaining Russian troops.

Russia and Lithuania will sign a bilateral treaty next month, Mr. Brazauskas also said, giving no details.

Russia had earlier suspended its scheduled withdrawal of troops from Lithuania and broken off negotiations after Vilnius demanded financial compensation for what it terms the Soviet

military occupation of the republic since 1940.

Russia recognised Lithuanian independence in 1992.

"During today's conversation with Boris Yeltsin, it was agreed that the Russian army will be withdrawn before the end of the month," Mr. Brazauskas said.

Liz Taylor: Jackson will be vindicated

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Elizabeth Taylor, flying to Michael Jackson's side, said in a television interview broadcast Monday that she believes her long-time friend will be cleared of child sex-abuse allegations against him.

"I believe totally that Michael will be vindicated. I believe in Michael's integrity, his love and trust in children," Taylor said in an interview for the programme A Current Affair conducted on the Singapore Airlines Jumbo Jet taking the actress to Singapore, where the pop star was performing.

Jackson has been accused of sexual abuse by a 13-year-old boy. The singer has denied molesting the boy, and police have turned up no physical evidence to support criminal charges against Jackson.

Since the story broke last week, Jackson's private detective, Anthony Pellicano, has charged that the boy's father — a Beverly Hills dentist — demanded 20 million through an attorney to buy his son's silence.

Taylor expressed concern about the allegations against Jackson. "Michael is one of my best friends in the whole world and I can't think of any worse thing that a human being could go through than what he's going through now," she said. "You can imagine how he feels. How would you feel if you had these

allegations against you? He's a very sensitive, very vulnerable, very shy person."

"I know it will come out all right," Taylor said. "Michael is a very proud man and he has good faith. He's a very spiritual and a very religious man."

Jackson's private detective said in an interview published Monday that he delayed telling police about an alleged extortion attempt against the pop star for more than two months to buy time and discredit those making allegations against Jackson.

"I knew that time was on my side," Mr. Pellicano told the Washington Post. "The longer the negotiations went on, the more discredited they are. And if I can get Michael on an airplane, he's on tour for four months and that's more time."

Pepsi-Cola, corporate sponsor of Michael Jackson's current world tour, has hired leading detective agency Kroll Associates to investigate the singer, the Guardian newspaper reported Monday.

Quoted as a "senior" Pepsi source as saying Kroll had been hired while another denied this. The story did not say why Pepsi wanted Jackson investigated.

A Pepsi spokesman in suburban New York denied the report, saying: "We are keeping our ear close to the ground, and we are not investigating Michael

Jackson."

A spokeswoman for Kroll said the investigative firm "never comments on our clients" and added that she could neither confirm nor deny the story.

Meanwhile Jackson squashed all speculation of health problems as he thrilled a capacity crowd of 50,000 screaming fans at the National Stadium here Sunday.

To screams of "Michael... Michael" the superstar waved to the capacity crowd, who broke out in a mass rendition of Happy Birthday, while a smiling Jackson stood motionless with his hands outstretched in a victory sign.

Jackson began his concert with one of his popular 1992 hits Jam, but the moment that song was over his backing band struck up the happy birthday tune to which the crowd responded in unison.

The superstar, who turned 35 Sunday, bowed to his fans after they finished their serenade, saying: "My friends, my friends... thank you, thank you."

Jackson showed no signs of any exhaustion throughout his 90-minute performance, strutting and dancing around the stage with his customary agility right up to the end.

In South Africa, singer Michael Jackson has been warned by the youth wing of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) not to fan "the fires of violence"

Japanese princess flies to Europe for 'love tryst'

TOKYO (AFP) — Princess Nori of Japan, daughter of Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, left for Europe Monday, where according to the Japanese press she was heading for a love tryst with a Japanese architecture student. Princess Nori, 24, flew to London, where she was to overnight before heading to Spain to spend about a week in an apartment owned by the Belgian royal family, and then go to Brussels as a guest of Queen Fabiola. She will meet up her parents in Europe at the end of their Sept. 3-19 European tour. According to the mass circulation weekly Shukan Bunshun, a discreet rendez vous has been fixed at a Belgian chateau on Sept. 12 with a possible fiancée. He was named as Toshiyuki Bojo, 31, who is studying gothic architecture in France and preparing a doctorate at the University of Tokyo. Mr. Bojo's grandfather was chamberlain to Emperor Meiji, who reigned from 1867-1912.

Longevity protein found by Japanese researchers

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese researchers said Monday they have discovered a protein that helps the life span of mice and could possibly do the same for humans. Experiments showed that those mice which took the protein mixed in their water twice a week lived five to 10 per cent longer than other mice and remained energetic until immediately before their death. Akira Okano of Shunshu University, who led the research, said the protein, which was originally found in flies, also existed in six-week-old human embryos, bees and silkworms. "I think there is a high possibility that the protein works on human beings because it was found in a certain stage of embryos and it had an effect on another mammals," Mr. Okano said.

Gilbert, George bring pop art panache to China

PEKING (R) — Gilbert and George, the dignified dandies of Britain's art world, brought pop art panache to Peking Monday as they reached one of the first major exhibitions of modern Western art to hit China's capital. From Beaches and Bubbles to Flat Man, Headview and Tongues, the Gilbert and George China Exhibition is being called a major leap toward bringing the world's most populous country into step with the Western art vanguard. That vanguard was in Peking in person Monday, and held a news conference for a group of mystified Chinese journalists to explain Gilbert and George's work — large sectioned canvases of young men, cityscapes, and the artists in their underwear. "Gilbert and George are living artists and sort of wanderers on this planet," Anders Kold, modern art curator at Denmark's Royal Museum of Fine Arts, told the reporters.

Remorseful art-lover apologises for stealing a statue

NICE, France (AFP) — An art-loving thief stole a statue from an exhibition in the public gardens at Beaulieu-sur-Mer on the French Riviera and then wrote to the local council to apologise; the council said Friday. The thief, who did not sign his letter, said he had fallen in love with the Resin statue, weighing around 100 kilos, by the artist Noel Thomann from Belfort, in eastern France. "I could never afford to buy myself such beautiful things, and besides it was a case of love at first sight," the thief said, promising to look after the statue. He asked the council to let the artist that he was "in love with his work" and thanked it for staging the exhibition, hoping that his "act of vandalism" would not close down the event. The organisers said they appreciated the fine sentiments of the thief, but wanted him to know that they expected the statue to be back on its base by Monday or they would be going to the police.

French airline lives off the fat of the land

PARIS (R) — A fat French model went on the warpath against an airline Sunday after being asked to pay two air fares to accommodate her 130 kilograms. Red-head Anne Zambertan, whose voluptuous curves are a common sight on French billboards, described domestic airline Air Inter's refusal to sell her a ticket for a single seat this weekend as "an attack on human dignity." Asked to pay double. She took a train instead. Air Inter denied it was discriminating against the fat and retorted that people who are ill and musicians travelling with instruments were also asked to pay for two seats.

Tajik leader takes home 5 CIS soldiers

TASHKENT, Uzbekistan (R) — Five soldiers, four Russian and one Kazakh, arrived back in Tajikistan Monday after being freed from nearly three weeks of captivity in Afghanistan.

Journalists witnessed the arrival of the hostages at Dushanbe Airport at Tajik leader Imomali Rakhmonov returned from three days of talks with Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani in Kabul, a reporter said by telephone from Dushanbe.

The hostages were seized as they guarded Tajikistan's border against Islamic Tajik rebels operating in northern Afghanistan.

The soldiers boarded Mr. Rakhmonov's plane shortly before the Tajik parliamentary leader and acting head of state left four Dushanbe, witnesses at Kabul Airport said.

There was no notice of the release until the plane was about to depart for the Tajik capital. The mainly Russian CIS forces are deployed under an agreement with Dushanbe to defend the former Soviet Central Asian republic from attacks by rebels based in Afghanistan.

Mr. Rakhmonov's visit, aimed at easing border tension between the two countries, was the first to Kabul by a foreign head of state since the Mujahideen took power in April last year.

Afghan authorities said Sunday that Russian forces in Tajikistan shelled Afghan border areas and scattered thousands of mines before Mr. Rakhmonov began the visit.

The official Kabul Radio said the Russian forces shelled parts of Badakhshan province and Russian jetfighters scattered about 5,000 mines there Wednesday and Thursday.

The mines destroyed several houses and crops in the area, it said.

Russia says USSR not guilty in KAL tragedy

MOSCOW (R) — Russian officials said Monday the Soviet Union bore no guilt for shooting down a South Korean airliner in 1983, laying the blame instead on pilot error and a series of fateful coincidences.

Sergei Filatov, head of a state commission investigating the tragedy, said Soviet Air Defence Forces firmly believed they were intercepting an enemy spy plane when they shot down flight KAL 007 and killed all 269 people on board.

"It turns out that the Soviet Union bears no guilt in this incident," Mr. Filatov told news conference.

The Korean Airlines plane was shot down by a Soviet fighter off Russia's Far East Sakhalin Island on Sept. 1, 1983 after straying deep into Soviet airspace on a flight from Anchorage, Alaska to Seoul.

Commission members said the Boeing 747 had been mistaken for a U.S. RS-135 spy plane sighted by Soviet Air Defence Forces on the Far Eastern peninsula of Kamchatka earlier the same day.

"The tragedy was the result of a whole chain of mistakes and coincidences, and not deliberate, malicious intent," said Mr. Filatov, who is also President Boris Yeltsin's chief of staff.

The tragedy dramatically heightened cold war tensions, with U.S. President Ronald Reagan accusing the Soviet side of knowingly destroying a civilian plane, saying the Boeing had been on a risky U.S. spy mission.

Mr. Filatov said neither of these positions was supported by the commission's findings, which resembled those of an earlier report by the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

Rudolf Teimurazov, head of Russia's Flight Safety Commission, said KAL 007's crew had set a faulty course within three minutes of take-off from Anchorage, and failed to correct it throughout the next five hours and 20 minutes as they strayed further and further north of their

correct route. They failed to observe correct procedure for checking and reporting their position at a series of points en route and were 350 miles off course by the time plane approached Sakhalin.

To Soviet Air Defence Forces, the arrival of a second intruder in their airspace indicated that a support plane had come to refuel the RS-135 and allow it to continue its mission.

ASU-15 fighter was dispatched from Sakhalin to meet the approaching aircraft, double back and give pursuit. At this point the final tragic error occurred, Mr. Teimurazov said.

The pursuing fighter flashed its lights, fired ahead of the Boeing and sent a radio message as a final warning.

But the Boeing at that moment was climbing in response to a message from Tokyo ground control, and the crew probably never saw the warning shot passing beneath them.

"After the fighter gave the 'friend or foe' interrogation signal and 007 failed to answer, the fighter received the order to attack the Boeing 747, which was thought to be an intruding RS-135 spy plane," Mr. Teimurazov said.

The plane, hit by a single rocket in the tail, briefly climbed and then plunged in a broad spiral for nine minutes, breaking up as it

Star of Cozzene captures Arlington Million

ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, Ill. (AP) — Without his rival Lure to crowd the stage, Star of Cozzene proved worthy of top billing with an authoritative 3/4-length victory in the Arlington Million Sunday.

Overnight and morning rain turned the turf at Arlington International Racecourse soft, a disadvantage which the 4-year-old gelding overcame. The scratch ended a chance for a rubber match for the pair, who had split four races this season.

Their spirited rivalry had been compared to the classic duel between Affirmed and Alydar in the 1978 triple crown.

Star of Cozzene, the heavy favorite, found himself part of an alarmingly familiar subplot throughout the first mile of the 1 1/4-mile race.

While saving ground on the rail the star horse of the team Valour Stable and jockey Jose Santos could not get out for a clear run. A similar scenario in the stretch at Saratoga cost the duo a win in the Bernard Baruch August 11.

Armstrong takes world cycling title

OSLO (AP) — America launched a new cycling star Sunday when Lance Armstrong spectacularly won the world professional title at his first attempt under driving rain in Oslo.

Yet Armstrong, the youngest champion ever at 21, had to be convinced he had really won after losing track of how many laps he had completed.

He broke 13 km from the end of the 252 km race after two falls and finish with a 193 sec advantage over Miguel Indurain, whose world number one title may soon be disputed.

But Armstrong revealed: "I wasn't sure it was the last lap. I looked at my counter on the last descent and only then realized I was going to win."

But he played down comparisons with compatriot veteran cycling star Greg Lemond, a three-time winner of the Tour De France.

"We have only got one thing in common," he said. "We're both American. He was two world championships and three Tour De France. Me, I've just won one World Championship."

German Olaf Ludwig was just beaten by the Tour De France and Giro D'Italia title holder in the final sprint. Johan Museeuw of Belgium was fourth and world cup leader Maurizio Fondriest of Italy was fifth.



American Lance Armstrong jubilates as he crosses the finish line to win the individual road race at the World Cycling Championships (AP photo)

Indurain said later: "I thought of giving up around half-way. I hesitated because I felt tired. I sprinted like the others and I

was very surprised to see that I was the fastest. But I don't have any regrets — Armstrong won, he was the strongest."

Navratilova knows her place at Open

NEW YORK (AP) — At the age of 36 and with a record 165 tournament titles, Martina Navratilova knows her place in history and in this year's U.S. Open.

"I've been beyond proving anything for a long time now," the left-hander said. "This is a golden time and I'm just enjoying the ride."

She's also enjoying rewriting the record book, which changes almost every time she takes to the court.

Navratilova, seeded third this year, a record 19th consecutive time she has been seeded in this tournament, 1993's final Grand Slam event. She had been tied with Jimmy Connors and Chris Evert for most years seeded and most successive years seeded.

When she takes the court against Gloria Pizzichini of Italy in a first-round match, Navratilova will play in her 21st consecutive tournament, besting Virginia Wade's mark of 20. It will be her 103rd match in U.S. Open play, still 10 shy of Evert's career mark.

And while she has captured four U.S. Open titles, she hasn't been the final woman standing on the hard courts of the National Tennis Centre since 1987 when she defeated Steffi Graf.

Rosset upsets Chang in Hamlet Final: In Commack, N.Y., unseeded Mark Rosset of Switzerland upset fifth-seeded American Michael Chang 6-4, 3-6, 6-1 in the final of the \$300,000 Waldenham Hamlet Cup tennis tournament Sunday.

Rosset, the Olympic gold medalist last year, won his first tournament since a victory at Marseille in February. He became the first unseeded player to win the Hamlet since Jonas Svensson of Sweden in 1987.

Rosset was in only his second tournament since having tonsils removed in July and being sidelined six weeks. He now has won seven of his last eight matches.

At six feet, seven inches (2.01 metres), Rosset produced serves of 120 miles per hour (193 kph) and used a smashing, accurate forehand to overpower the five-foot-eight (1.73 metre) Chang in the first and third sets.

Enqvist outlasts Steven on day of non-seeds: In Schenectady, N.Y., Thomas Enqvist used a powerful serve and baseline game to beat Brent Steven 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-0) Sunday for the men's championship at the OTB International.

Larisa Neiland defeated Natalia Medvedeva 6-3, 7-5 to win the women's title.

All the singles finalists were unseeded.

Enqvist defeated top-seeded Ivan Lendl in the quarterfinals and sixth seed Carlos Costa to advance to the finals.

"It was unbelievable," Enqvist said of winning seven straight points in the tiebreaker, "I just went for my shots."

Master on the double: In Umag, Croatia, Australian Thomas Muster justified his top seeding by winning the ATP \$400,000 tournament for the second year in a row.

He beat Spaniard Alberto Berasategui, seeded sixth, 7-5, 3-6, 6-3.

World Cup qualifiers Brazil avenge loss to Bolivia; Uruguay keep slim hopes alive

By the Associated Press

BRAZIL AVENGED its only loss in World Cup qualifying by humiliating Bolivia 6-0 before a sold-out crowd of 75,000 on Sunday, and Colombia put itself in position to earn its second straight World Cup qualifying berth with a 4-0 victory over Peru.

Raul, Muller and Bebeto all scored in an 11-minute span in the first half to spark the rout by Brazil, which wanted revenge for a 2-0 loss to Bolivia July 25 in La Paz.

"We just gave Bolivia the answer to La Paz," Brazilian manager Carlos Alberto Parreira said.

The victory in Recife, Brazil, also starkly improved Brazil's chances to qualify for the 1994 World Cup, moving it to 3-2-1 and eight points in South American Group B. It is two points behind Bolivia (5-0-1) and two ahead of Uruguay (2-2-1). Two teams will qualify from Group B. Both Bolivia and Brazil have two games remaining while Uruguay has three.

Colombia's victory gave it sole possession of first place in Group A, from which only one team will automatically qualify, with one game remaining. Because Argentina drew 0-0 with Paraguay at Buenos Aires Sunday, Colombia needs only to draw with Argentina next Sunday in Buenos Aires to get its tickets for the United States.

Colombia (3-2-0) has eight points, one more than Argentina and three more than Paraguay. The runner-up from Group A will have to win a two-legged series with Australia to earn qualification.

Elsewhere Sunday, Uruguay kept its hopes alive in Group B with a 4-0 victory over Venezuela. Brazil's victory came against a team which was unbeaten and limited and had outscored its opponents 2-0 in qualifying.

"Brazil Sunday played the soccer noble of a three-time World champion," said Pele, a sports commentator for TV Globo.

Raul gave Brazil the lead in the 13th minute, kicking the ball out of the goalkeeper's arms after Bebeto had put the initial shot on goal.

Muller added another in the 19th, knocking a header just off the underside of the crossbar, with a light rain that began to fall in the 20th minute. Bebeto set the rout in motion in the 24th, scoring the first of two by taking a pass from Branco and chipping a ball into the upper right corner.

Branco added one of his own in the 36th off a corner kick and Ricardo Gomes sent Brazil into the locker room at halftime with a 5-0 lead with a goal in the 44th.

Bebeto then added his second in the 57th.

Colombia 4, Peru 0

At Barranquilla, Colombia, after being kept away from the net for all but one shot in the first 15 minutes, Ivan Rene Valencia and Freddy Rincon scored two minutes apart to give Colombia a 2-0 lead by the 41st minute and delight the crowd of 50,000 at Barranquilla's Metropolitan Stadium.

Valencia gave Colombia the lead, taking a pass from Faustino Asprilla and shooting between the legs of Peruvian goalkeeper Miguel Miranda. Rincon beat Miranda to the right to double the lead and Alexis Mendoza squashed any Peruvian hopes in the 65th minute.

Wilson Perez completed the scoring 10 minutes later.

Argentina 0, Paraguay 0

At Buenos Aires, Argentina, Paraguay dominated throughout most of the first half, while the Argentines moved forward in the second half but were unable to score before 50,000 fans at River Plate Stadium.

Gabriel Gonzalez had Paraguay's best chances in the second and ninth minutes, and Alfredo Mendoza had another in the 20th minute, but were deftly turned aside by goalkeeper Sergio Goycochea.

Argentina, seemingly confused and indecisive, finally took control at 30 minutes, setting up several scoring opportunities. Gabriel Batistuta and Ramon Medina Bello threatened but were unable to beat goalkeeper Jose Chilavert.

Uruguay 4, Venezuela 0

At Montevideo, Uruguay, Fernando Kanapakis scored on headers in the seventh and 30 minutes to upset the Uruguayans' hopes. Uruguay still must face Ecuador at Guayaquil next Sunday, Bolivia Sept. 12 at Montevideo and Brazil Sept. 19 in Rio De Janeiro.

Gabriel Cedres scored on another header five minutes before halftime and Ruben Sosa completed the scoring before 35,000 in Centenario Stadium on a blistering shot from outside the penalty area in the 64th.

Prost, Hill both have reason to celebrate GP

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium (AP) — Alain Prost and Damon Hill each left the Belgian Prix with reason to celebrate.

Hill won the event for his second consecutive victory. Prost took another step toward his fourth world championship.

And together, they gave Williams-Renault its second consecutive team title.

If that was not enough, the win

also gave Renault's its 50th victory, firmly establishing it as the dominant engine of the 1990s. Savouring the gargantuan success, Hill just asked "what more can I say?"

Team leader Frank Williams did it for him, celebrating his 70th win: "This has been a great day. In a thrilling race up to the end, Hill held off a charging Michael Schumacher of Germany, who

had compromised victory by almost stalling on the starting grid. His comeback just fell short.

Prost led for most of the race. But when a slow pit stop for new tires allowed Hill through, he drove a controlled race, knowing even third place would bring the world title beckoning, since his closest challenger Ayrton Senna was lagging in fourth place. "I scored one point more than

Senna, which is exactly the result I wanted to get for my championship," he said.

Prost now has 81 points in the overall standings with Senna in second place with 53. Hill closed in on the Brazilian and has 48 points, while Schumacher totals 42.

Senna has already given up any realistic hope of catching Prost.

Celebrities raise funds for Ashe charity Seles greeted with standing ovation in New York

FLUSHING MEADOWS, N.Y. (AP) — A day before the arduous U.S. Open, the elite names of tennis — watched by Monica Seles in her first public appearance since her stabbing — fooled around for a good cause. They came to play, entertain and have a few laughs as part of the second annual Arthur Ashe AIDS Tennis Challenge. The event was organized to raise money to defeat AIDS, the disease which claimed the life of Ashe in February.

Seles stood in the shade of the steeple and paused, as if afraid to take the next step.

Above her, the crowd, ahead, the court. In her mind, the memories.

"Monica, there are a lot of people up there who want to open a lot of love on you," U.S. Open tournament director Steve Devos assured her.

They didn't know she was com-

ing Sunday. No one outside her close circle did. She decided only the day before to join the tennis world in honouring the memory of Arthur Ashe and his foundation for the defeat of AIDS.

She couldn't play in the exhibition for charity, and she can't defend her two straight Open titles starting Monday. But she could take a stand just by showing up. And so she did.

Now on the stairs, she walked tentatively up into the brilliant sunlight, gaily dressed in a cherry-red striped blouse, a white ribbon in her dark hair, a nervous smile on her face.

And when Alan King, master of ceremonies, announced her immediately to the crowd, 13,000 fans rose, as Devos had predicted, "to pour a lot of love" on her.

They embraced her with their applause longer and more warmly than they did when she won the

championships. They made her feel safe in New York.

Seles smiled, giggled, seemed almost embarrassed. And she looked, even in sunglasses, as if that applause was some of the best therapy she's received.

She sat beside Ashe's widow Jeanne and daughter Camera, signed autographs and, at one point, leaned over a railing from the president's box to exchange a kiss and hug with Jennifer Capriati.

"It's a very special day," Seles said. "I wanted to be here because I love Arthur and I want to support his foundation for the defeat of AIDS."

Seles, 19, wasn't even born when Ashe won the first U.S. title of the open era in 1968. But she came to know about him and respect him, like most of the other stars at Sunday's benefit, more for his good works than his fine play.

Still, it wasn't easy to come here.

Four months have passed since she'd last entered a tennis stadium. Four months since she was wheeled out, a knife wound in her back from a deranged fan obsessed with Steffi Graf.

Now she was in a stadium again, in the stands instead of on a court. She didn't know when she'd hit a ball again, when she'd play again, and most importantly whether she'd ever be as good again.

But with the fans cheering her, and security guards all around, at least she looked unafraid. New York City Mayor David Dinkins, heavyweight boxing champion Riddick Bowe and former heavyweight champ Evander Holyfield were among the non-tennis celebrities involved.

Tennis stars John McEnroe, Andre Agassi, Pete Sampras, Jim Courier, Michael Stich, Zina Garrison Jackson, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario and Jennifer Capriati participated.

For McEnroe, who hasn't played on the circuit in 1993, the visit to stadium court brought back many memories.

"It was fun out there," said a smiling McEnroe, who lost to Agassi 7-5 in their light-hearted

encounter.

McEnroe, who won four U.S. Open singles crowns and will do television commentary at this year's tournament, played an amusing tiebreaker with Agassi.

When American comedian Alan King, acting as umpire for the two, made an unfavourable call, Agassi walked up to the chair and mimicked one of McEnroe's infamous lines from Wimbledon.

"You cannot be serious," Agassi shrieked, sounding eerily like McEnroe.

The play wasn't wasted on McEnroe. He started mocking Agassi's trademark habits, including lifting his shirt up to reveal his chest.

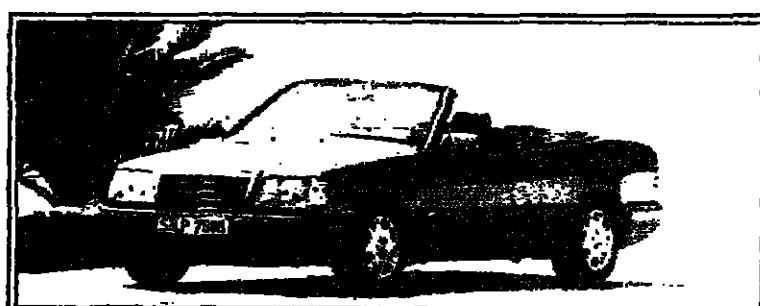
But they also remembered the serious purpose of the day.

"Anyone who knew Arthur and a tremendous respect for him," said Agassi. "He died of a tragic disease and everybody is supporting this event out of respect for him."

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Bosnia talks resume amid differences

GENEVA (Agencies) — Bosnia's Muslim president said he felt like a thirsty man sent into the desert for water as he headed Monday for peace talks deadlocked over a plan to divide Bosnia into three ethnic states.

But U.N. official warned Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic against seeking radical changes in the package proposed Aug. 20 by international mediators, saying any additional demands could wreck the whole agreement.

Mediators Lord Owen of the European Community (EC) and Thorvald Stoltenberg of the United Nations set Monday as the deadline for accepting their compromise proposal.

The talks between Muslim, Serb and Croat leaders, however, were postponed for a day because Mr. Izetbegovic was unable to arrive in time from the besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo.

The proposed agreement gives the Muslim-led government 31 per cent of Bosnia. The Serbs would get 52 per cent, down from the 70 per cent of Bosnia they now control, and Croats 17 per cent.

The Muslim-led government, which currently controls 10 per cent of Bosnia after losing the war, rejected the package over the weekend, demanding more land as well as U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) participation in any peace settlement.

Mr. Izetbegovic said he was going to Geneva to seek justice for his people, who made up 43 per cent of the pre-war population.

"I feel like a thirsty man who somebody is sending to a desert to look for water," Mr. Izetbegovic told Sarajevo Radio Monday before leaving for Geneva.

"Our people need peace, and the proposals being offered are worse than war," he said. "There is little justice, and the law of force is ruling the world."

But the United Nations official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity, said Mr. Izetbegovic should not expect radical changes of the plan since it already meets four of five "concessions" demanded by Muslims during a previous round of talks.

"Those concessions and the whole package are not going to stay on the table indefinitely," the official said. He said the only Muslim demand not included in the plan was that they have a territorial link — instead of just a road — between their state and the eastern enclaves of Zepa and Srebrenica.

"Everyone who returns tomorrow is fully aware of the dangers associated with opening up the package," said the official in an apparent reference to the Muslims.

"The next days will determine whether the peace is given a chance, or whether there is a continued and intensified conflict," he said.

The Bosnian Serbs have agreed to the plan and Croats said they would seek some smaller changes to the proposed borders. Both the Serbs and Croats have warned the Muslims they will not receive any more land and that they may lose everything if the war continues.

"Muslims are risking to lose even the 10 per cent of land they now hold if they don't sign the compromise plan," Bosnia's Serb leader Radovan Karadzic told the

Belgrade-based Tanjug news agency.

"If they don't sign, we and Croats could divide Bosnia in two," Mr. Karadzic warned. The Muslims say the current plan rewards Serb aggression and the expulsion of Muslims by occupying forces. They said the government would seek more territory in eastern Bosnia where the Serbs have committed worst atrocities.

Those attending the talks include Mr. Izetbegovic, Mr. Karadzic, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, Croatian President Franjo Tudjman, and Bosnian Croat leader Mate Boban.

The 17-month old Bosnian war has left 200,000 people dead or missing, and forced more than two million people to flee their homes.

In Mostar, talks were continuing between United Nations officials and both Muslim and Croat authorities to free 52 Spanish U.N. troops being held hostage in the besieged Muslim sector by women and children.

Arguing that the presence of the U.N. peacekeepers offered the only security from Croat guns that have pounded the quarter for weeks, Sana Hamzal, 30, told Reuters: "Our life is in danger, and as long as the U.N. are here we are safe."

Her view was echoed by Pliema Pobriza, 59, who wept as she said her son, grandson and granddaughter had all been killed during the siege of Mostar.

"I just can't take it any more. There's nothing left except to try to save our own lives, and we see a keeping UNPROFOR (U.N. Protection Force) here as a way of doing that."

Muslim official Alija Alikadic said the intensity of Croat attacks had dropped since the arrival of the U.N. troops last Thursday at the head of a convoy of food and medicine.

"Since the U.N. has been here only one civilian has been killed," he said. "If they had not been here 10 people would have been killed in the same period."

"People who used to hide in their homes now feel secure enough to come out in the street and talk with their neighbours," he added.

Mr. Alikadic called for the U.N. Security Council to declare Mostar a U.N. "safe area," as it has done to a handful of besieged Muslim enclaves in Serb-controlled eastern Bosnia.

One of the U.N. soldiers, Ivan Castellanos, said he would welcome such a development.

"We would rather be patrolling the streets than sitting doing nothing, but our role here has to change for us to be able to do that," he said.

The soldiers said they were being well treated and morale was high, but some complained of frustration and boredom.

In Sarajevo, concern focused on aid supplies.

Officials are worried a drop in convoys and fewer aid flights into Sarajevo could mean the city's 380,000 residents may not get enough supplies of plastic sheeting, blankets and fuel in time for winter, when temperatures can plunge to minus 15 degrees Celsius (five degrees Fahrenheit).

"I don't think yet we're at the crisis stage," Peter Janseen, a spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), told reporters.

Iraq-U.N. talks begin today

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraqi officials Tuesday began high-level talks here on weapons monitoring and other issues they hope will lead to the lifting of a crippling, three-year oil embargo.

Officials of the U.N. Special Commission on weapons monitoring said talks would begin Tuesday at 3 p.m. (1900 GMT).

The 15-member Iraqi delegation is led by General Amer Mohammed Rashid, director of the Military Industrialisation Corporation. The team also includes Hossam Mohammed Amin, liaison with the commission, and Abdul Halim Al Hajjaj of the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission.

The U.N. side is headed by Rolf Ekeus, a Swedish disarmament expert who is chairman of the special commission.

Gen. Rashid and Mr. Ekeus were to hold a preliminary session Monday afternoon, Iraqi sources said.

Trade and oil embargoes were imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The Security Council maintained the sanctions after the Gulf war ended to compel Iraq to meet conditions of the ceasefire.

Under the ceasefire terms, Iraq is prohibited from acquiring or developing nuclear, chemical, biological and ballistic weapons that have a range greater than 150 kilometres. It also must cooperate in future monitoring, which it

only recently accepted. The talks are expected to focus primarily on long-term monitoring of Iraq's nuclear and ballistic weapons industries and on activating television cameras at two missile test sites.

In an interim compromise to avert a U.S. attack, Iraq agreed to the placement of cameras at the test sites. But they will not be activated unless the talks in New York resolve various issues on long-term monitoring.

Iraq also is expected to be asked for a complete list of foreign suppliers of its various weapons programmes.

But Iraq's major objective will be to persuade the commission to certify to the Security Council that Baghdad has met key weapons-related provisions of the ceasefire resolution.

Once the council agrees, the prohibitions against the import of products from Iraq and other financial transactions would be lifted.

The United States and Britain, however, want to link lifting of the oil embargo to fulfillment of other ceasefire terms and resolutions. They include the return of Gulf war detainees and better treatment of Kurds and Shiites within Iraq (see page 2).

Iraq has complied with the majority of weapons provisions and Baghdad argues it is time to permit Iraq to sell oil, its major

foreign exchange earner. Western diplomats, however, say the Security Council is not likely in the near future to lift the oil sanctions.

Iraq said Monday foreign companies were ready to buy its oil once the sanctions were eased or lifted.

"The (oil) ministry has received a great number of offers in the past months from foreign companies willing to purchase its oil," Oil Minister Usama Al Hiti told the government newspaper Al Jumhuriyah in an interview.

Mr. Hiti did not disclose the names of the companies but said Iraq would astonish the world once it was back in the market.

"Iraq will surprise the world of what it has achieved in the field of oil production and manufacturing," Mr. Hiti said. He did not elaborate.

He said Iraq was ready to export "with various exporting capabilities once the suitable conditions are available."

Technical and engineering teams had completed preparations to export oil abroad through different outlets, the minister said.

Iraq says its pipeline through Turkey, carrying 1.6 million barrels a day was almost ready. It also said it had repaired its Mina Al Bakr terminal capable of handling another 1.6 million barrels.

17 given death sentences in Algeria

ALGIERS (R) — Special courts in the Algerian capital and in Oran, west of here, have condemned 17 people to death for terrorism and subversion, judicial officials said here.

The sentences were handed down at the weekend and four of the 17 were condemned in absentia.

The Algerian government has pledged to step up its fight against Islamic militants of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) who have been blamed for the assassination earlier this month of former Prime Minister Kasdi Merbah.

The fundamentalists have waged a violent campaign against the authorities since the government scrapped elections that the FIS was poised to win in January 1992.

New Premier Rehda Malek meanwhile continued consultations on forming his government.

Mr. Malek still had not named his cabinet nine days after the military-backed High State Council sacked his predecessor, Belaid Abdul Salam, who had made overtures to moderate fundamentalists and failed to revive the stagnant, centralised economy.

A former foreign minister who rules out reconciliation with Islamic "terrorists," Mr. Malek is ensuring his team shares his views. The key interior and economy posts have apparently not been filled.

Noureddine Zerhouni, a former chief of the dreaded political police and Algeria's current ambassador to the United States, is reportedly in the running for the interior job, which controls police and is on the front line against armed Islamic groups.

Mourach Benachenoun, former executive director of the World Bank, and Abdul Rahman Rostoumi Hadj Nacer, Algeria's former Central bank president, are top candidates for the economics post.

The government will not have a term limit and could survive the High State Council, which is to serve until the end of the year and be replaced by a three-man presidency.

Police meanwhile reported that three Islamic extremists wanted for murder and bomb-making were killed by security forces Saturday in Mostaganem, western Algeria.

The same day, a policeman was gunned down outside his home in an Algiers suburb.

Police reported Saturday that four Islamic gunmen were rooted out and killed in Algiers' old Casbah quarter last week. Arms used in the murders of police officers were seized.

Gummen killed a soldier and a police officer outside their homes in separate attacks Thursday and Friday in Al Harach, a fundamentalist hotbed in the capital. No arrests were made.

The deaths brought the number of alleged Islamic gunmen killed since Aug. 1 to 50, while 23 police officers and soldiers and 41 civilians have died.



A man stands at the front gate of the French Action Internationale Contre le Faim (International Action Against Hunger) in Mogadishu Monday after it was damaged by U.S. troops during an overnight raid (AFP photo).

U.S. troops arrest aid workers in bungled raid in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (Agencies) — Elite U.S. troops stormed two Mogadishu aid compounds and detained foreign U.N. staff early on Monday in a bungled attempt to hit back at fugitive warlord Mohammed Farah Aideded.

Crack American Rangers snaked down ropes after U.S. attack helicopters swooped low over buildings belonging to the United Nations Development Project (UNDP) and the French humanitarian organisation Action Internationale Contre la Faim (AICF).

The black-beretted Rangers, supported by members of a U.S. rapid reaction force, broke down walls with grenades, kicked in doors and destroyed radio equipment before seizing three foreign aid workers and six Somali U.N. guards.

All were released as soon as it became clear that they were part of the U.N. operation to rebuild Somalia and not supporters of General Aideded, the man the U.N. blames for wrecking peace plans.

The workers were UNDP tied up, ordered to lie on the floor and detained during what U.N. military spokesman Major David Stockwell said was a "cordon and search operation."

The Rangers also damaged the front gate and demolished part of the compound wall surrounding the office and residence of the AICF, which neighbours the UNDP.

AICF employees were also ordered to lie down with hands tied to their back as the soldiers searched.

Christian Captier, director of the charity's operations in the

Somali capital, said he would demand an "official explanation" from the United Nations "knew where we were, our building is well-known."

This was the second time AICF has been victim to U.N. troops' military action. On June 17 one Somali was killed and another injured when the AICF compound was hit by a missile fired by a U.S. Cobra helicopter in an operation against Aideded positions.

Gen. Aideded is wanted by the U.N. for allegedly ordering his militiamen to attack troops, including the killing of 24 Pakistani soldiers here on June 5.

It was the biggest military operation in the Somali capital for several weeks and the first since the arrival last week of a 400-strong contingent of a crack U.S. army Ranger unit sent in to track down Gen. Aideded and end violence snarling U.N. aid work.

Mogadishu was described as "quiet and calm" after the raid in which no Somalis were believed to have been killed.

But the blunder appeared set to increase tensions between the humanitarian and military wings of the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) which has been plagued by problems since command was passed from Washington to the U.N. last April.

Pentagon spokesman Joe Gradisher declined to say whether the troops were searching for Gen. Aideded or his top commanders.

Aid work in the ruined capital has ground to a virtual halt since U.N. forces started trying to arrest Sen. Aideded.

Aid workers reacted angrily to the raid which they said would destroy even more of what little credibility the U.S.-led military operation still has in the ruined capital.

"It's just another nail in the coffin for the U.N. military forces, and I believe they have really crossed the line here. It's another blunder — these troops have come here with no experience in Somalia," said Jamie McKindrick of the British charity Save the Children Fund.

Mr. McKindrick said the U.N. was being conciliatory and had described the raid as a "screw up" on armed forces band radio.

The three foreigners detained — Larry Dubois, Tony Millet, Maurice O'Donnell — were released almost immediately. Mr. O'Donnell, an Irishman, is the UNDP's communications officer.

U.N. Spokesman Stockwell, confirming the "cordon and search" operation took place in Gen. Aideded's stronghold of south Mogadishu, said the detainees had been staying in an unauthorised residence.

"They went in to search these two buildings and these people just happened to be in the wrong place," he told reporters.

Maj. Stockwell said 50 troops and 12 attack helicopters took part in the operation which began at around 3 a.m. local time (2400 GMT) and lasted about two-and-a-half hours.

Mr. McKindrick said the raid showed a total lack of military intelligence.

"They completely ignored the large blue U.N. flag on top of the building, but then later confiscated it," he said.

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COLUMN

Clinton ends vacation 'refreshed, renewed'

MARTHA'S VINEYARD, Massachusetts (R) — President Bill Clinton said goodbye to the island of Martha's Vineyard at the end of an 11-day sojourn that appeared to have rejuvenated his spirits ahead of a tough autumn agenda. "My family never needed a vacation more and it's hard to imagine how this one could have been better," Mr. Clinton told hundreds of people who turned out to see him off at Martha's Vineyard airport. Mr. Clinton described himself as "very much refreshed, renewed and ready to go back to work for the American people," mentioning specifically the issue of health care reform, which will be his next major item of business. Recommendations on the health package, a vast and long-awaited project overseen by his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton, will be unveiled on Sept. 22. Mrs. Clinton told the crowd that she and her husband and daughter Chelsea, 13, were taking home mementoes of their good times on the island for future occasions "when times get hard in Washington."

Commoner spoils tabloids' hopes of royal romance

OSLO (AP) — A windsurfing commoner drove his tiny Fiat through a line of Royal limousines, claiming a seat at the king's banquet and a place in his princess' heart. The move crushed British tabloids' hopes for a royal romance this weekend. Fourteen unmarried princes and princesses are attending a five-day celebration that marks Norwegian King Harald V and Queen Sonja's 25th wedding anniversary Sunday. With that many young and single nobles around, news media across Europe has launched into a feeding frenzy speculating on royal matches. But Per Gunnar Haugen, a 23-year-old windsurfer, was not in their game plan. A surprise guest Saturday at the king's dinner and ball at the Oslo Palace, Haugen accompanied his long-time girlfriend, Norway's Princess Martha Louise. British news media had hoped to pair up the pretty 21-year-old princess with other royal guests, such as their own Prince Edward, or Denmark's Prince Joachim, or the exiled Prince Nicholas of Greece.

"With Haugen's presence at the palace, all the foreign speculation that this weekend's silver anniversary could end in a royal romance for Martha Louise should be put to rest," the Oslo newspaper Verdens Gang declared Sunday. Oh well, there's always other royals.

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DFLP and PFLP say Arafat manipulated funds

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two leftist Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) factions Monday claimed that two large money transfers from PLO accounts had been made to an unidentified bank in Cairo and were awaiting transfer orders to banks in either Israel or the occupied territories in preparation of a possible Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho.